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[GERTRUDE DOUBTS HOLLAND HERNshaw.]

MRS. LARKALL'S BOARDING-SCHOOL.

By the Author of "Man and His Lot."

CHAPTER V.

THE FASHIONABLE BOARDING-SCHOOL.

A press of snowy shoulders, thick as herbed oves, And rainbow robes, and gems, and gem-like eyes, And black and golden heads. *Tennyson.*

The rumour of the terrible calamity at the Towers, preceded Gertrude Norman's return to the boarding-school, at which she stayed less to finish her education than because it afforded a fitting home to a young woman.

In Mrs. Larkall's establishment, Amy had been the loved and petted pupil. All admired her, many loved her, and envied Gertrude the privilege of calling the darling her bosom friend.

News of her idiosyncrasy, therefore, filled them with pity and consternation. They could not understand how it had happened. How could they? The occurrence looked like a judgment of Heaven, and though, like many similar acts with which Heaven is credited, it was due to human wickedness, the clue to the mystery was hidden in the breasts of Gertrude Norman and the ayah.

Both were eagerly questioned; but knew nothing. They attributed the occurrence to fright, and Mahala startled all who spoke to her on the matter by the solemn assurance that the Towers were haunted, and that she had seen the spectre.

"What was it like?" was the eager inquiry. The ayah's replies were guarded, but showed a wonderful richness of imagination and a power of lying in a calm, truth-like manner, which proved how dangerous a being she was—how utterly unscrupulous, how terribly wanting in every moral quality!

Mrs. Larkall's Boarding-school, was, as I have said, not less a school than a home for young ladies. It was situated at Brighton, in one of the noble

squares facing the sea, which always remind one of the West End, removed by the wand of an enchanter, to the sea-side. Several adjoining houses in the square went to make up the school, were connected by doors knocked through the partition walls, and thus the establishment itself was larger and more commodious than many noblemen's mansions. Everything in and about the school was on a grand and imposing scale. It appealed entirely to the two aristocracies—those of birth and capital, and the expression usually applied to it in local circles was that Mrs. Larkall's was "tip-top."

That expression applied with peculiar force to Mrs. Larkall herself.

She was not only the presiding genius, but the embodiment of the very spirit of the establishment.

People—that is "good people"—who had daughters to educate, or to get rid of, as the case might be, and who called, were received in a sumptuous apartment, by a fine, tall, noble woman—a little inclining to over-stoutness—in a rustling brocade dress, of some dark colour, relieved by a massive gold chain. The lady would bend almost to curtsying (all schoolmistresses have a tendency to over-curtsying) would fix her large, lustrous, some people said, wicked—dark eyes on the visitor, while a smile broke over her handsome, rosy face, disclosing a row of teeth of dazzling whiteness, and then the visitor, if of the male sex, was apt to notice nothing else except that the fine face was surmounted by ample rolls of jet-black hair, on which rested a square of mechin-lace, not a cap; but a dainty coquetry with that symbol of matronhood.

It was this woman's destiny to rule. She had the faculty of commanding; combined with it she had the instinct of fascination.

Who was she? It was impossible but that this question should be often put; but it was never answered.

The curious, struck by her beauty and impressed by her manners, were always worrying themselves as to her antecedents. To what family did she belong? Who was Larkall? Was there a Larkall living or dead? How had she obtained the means whereby she had taken Brighton by storm, like a victorious

general, and planted her "establishment" at the head of the establishments, colleges, seminaries, and the rest of the educational organizations, for which the town is famed?

No exact information was forthcoming on any of these points.

Rumours circulated, and people shook their heads and sniffed when Mrs. Larkall was mentioned; yet they would have found it difficult to say why. Some pretended to discover a taint of vulgarity, the slightest in the world, but still a taint, in the woman's manners. Then there was a school legend of "a man,"—that was the vague description—who had come to the house one snowy night, long ago, and had insisted on an interview with Mrs. Larkall, reluctant as she was, and had stayed three hours, and carried off the French clock from the mantel-piece, and the lady's gold chain, not the one she now wore, but the exact counterpart of it, ordered down from London next morning, and the silver-spoons, leaving Mrs. Larkall senseless on the hearth-rug.

In spite of insinuation, and innendo, and rumour, and scandal, the establishment had flourished, and was flourishing. House was added to house in vain; the more houses the more pupils seemed to be the rule, and Mrs. Larkall was always full.

There seemed no reason why she should not take the entire square, one side of which she occupied, and that might have been the result, but for an occurrence—

But to describe that would be to anticipate the course of our narrative.

There was a peculiarity about Mrs. Larkall's Boarding-school. From the first it had been noted for pretty girls. How she managed no one knew; but every new pupil was sure to be only an additional flower in the bouquet of beauty over which this fine woman presided. Now, as every pupil was over fourteen, and many out of their teens altogether, it will be seen that this fact of the personal beauty of each, while it added to the popularity of the school, increased Mrs. Larkall's responsibilities in no inconsiderable degree. Plain girls are safe enough without bolt or bar, but beauty is a delicate thing to have charge of.

On the night of Gertrude's return to Brighton, the dark beauty sat in the pupils' drawing-room—equal in appearance to the drawing-rooms of first-class private-houses—surrounded by a dozen lovely girls.

Their talk was of Amy—always of Amy. "Would they never have done?" Gertrude asked herself; "could they guess how distasteful that topic was to her, and pursue it in mere wantonness?"

No, it was mere curiosity, intensified from their love of the idiot-girl, as she could but see. They had no wish to annoy her; they could have had no idea that their questions tortured her.

"And so it was fright?" asked Rose Merry, a charming girl of eighteen, who had been told she was like Vestris, and so wore her dress off her shoulders, after a portrait of that popular actress.

"So Mahala says," burst in a merry creature, with a tangle of black tresses like a mane about her shoulders; "and I'm not surprised. I remember a story about a man who made a bet to go into a vault at midnight, and stick a knife into a coffin-lid, and he stuck it through the tail of his coat; and when he tried to leave, couldn't, and thought it was the devil man's hand clutching at him, and dropped down and died of fright. Awful, wasn't it?"

"Did you see the ghost, dear?" asked Miss and Dora Wimpole of Gertrude.

"Ghost! what ghost?" she answered, abstractedly. "Why, the one that haunts the Towers. Mahala can't describe it for shuddering; but she says it is the ghost of a man—is it?"

"I—I believe so," muttered Gertrude.

"Then you have not seen it?"

"No."

"But you believe that Amy did? Or is it your ayah's ignorance?"

Before Gertrude could reply the ayah entered the room.

"You have been imposing upon the girls, Mahala," said her mistress, severely, "with a tale of the ghost of the Towers. Only children and ignorant people believe in ghosts! Why do you tell lies?"

The dark eyes of the ayah flashed fire.

"I have spoken the truth!" she said. "Bilano, and I will describe the man who haunts the Towers, and through whose little Amy was frightened to madness. Shall I do it? Is it your wish?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" cried the merry girls.

"No!" said Gertrude, sternly, for there was an evil expression on the face of her attendant that showed she meant mischief.

The latter only bowed meekly after the manner of her race. Then, as if it had only suddenly occurred to her, she said, with peculiar significance:

"Mr. Hershaw is here, Miss."

"Roland here!"

She could not restrain the words, though the instant after she regretted them, since she did not care to reveal, by word or look, the secret of her heart.

"He has been here since dusk," said Mahala.

"Indeed! Has he asked for me?"

"No. He has been closeted with Mrs. Larkall in the study. The servants had orders on no account to interrupt them, as they had business of importance to transact."

Gertrude turned suddenly of a ghostly whiteness.

She both loved and feared this man. Her love prompted jealous suspicions as to what should procure him secret interviews with the mistress of the house.

Her fear made her suspect the ayah of treachery in the matter of Amy's fate, as well as the course Roland might pursue, since he knew that she had discovered his secret—the secret connected with the mysterious Joanna, whose name she had so incautiously mentioned.

"I will see him," she muttered to herself, but loud enough for the ayah to hear.

Then she abruptly left the room.

Mahala walked up to a glass, and grinned at the reflection of herself, rubbing her dusky hands one over the other, hard, as she did so.

"If I'd told her he did ask for her, 'twould have made her happy," she thought. "Why should she be happy? I ain't—and all through her. He's gone by this, and she'll cry and moan all night. So much the better."

Meanwhile, Gertrude had descended the stairs, painfully agitated. The question that possessed her was this: "If they met, how would Roland treat her?"

They had parted as lovers part; they would meet—how?

Trembling with agitation, Gertrude took her way towards the study, without any definite idea of what she would do, when, to her intense astonishment, she heard her own name pronounced.

The next moment Roland Hershaw bounded up the stairs leading from the study floor and stood before her.

"At last!" he exclaimed, holding out his hand.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it is an hour since I sent for you; I thought you declined to see me."

"Oh, Roland!"

The passionate earnestness with which she pronounced these words must have dispelled any fears of her devotion to him, had he entertained them, which was not the case.

"You did not know I was here?" he asked.

"Yes; I heard that you were in the house, that you were with Mrs. Larkall, but I did not know—"

"That it was you I came to see," he interrupted hastily, as if afraid that she would ask some awkward question; "oh, yes: my paying a friendly visit to Mrs. Larkall was a blind—nothing more, I assure you—it was you who were in my thoughts. You were the star that guided my footsteps hither. And shall I tell you, frankly, what I feared? Why, that you were jealous of—it makes me laugh to think of it—of Joanna."

He laughed: Gertrude did not.

"You don't see the joke!" he said, biting his lips with vexation; "you will in a moment. You know that most foreigners belong to secret political clubs; I am a foreigner by extraction, an Englishman by birth. I belong to such a club. It is sacred to liberty; but to speak that word is a crime in many countries, and so we have to christen them. We call her—Joanna."

There was a smile upon the handsome face of the young man, as he watched the effects of this ready lie upon the listening girl. He thought that she believed him, and chuckled at the idea. As for the girl, she was anxious, above all things, to avoid a subject at the bare thought of which her heart grew cold.

"There is danger in—Joanna, is there not?" she asked.

In spite of himself, the handsome youth changed colour.

"Not for me—at least, not in this country," was his answer; but Gertrude could see that he was greatly moved.

It was a second or two before he could recover his easy tone. Then, grasping the girl by both hands, he said:

"Well, this explains all, and I hope that we meet, Gertrude, on the same footing as ever. What my sentiments towards you are, you know, for I have told you, again and again. As to my sincerity, Mrs. Larkall—"

Gertrude involuntarily put up her hand; that one word, "sincerity," touched her like a knife.

She thought of Joanna.

She thought of Amy, who had innocently confessed her lover's perfidy.

She thought also of the hours spent so mysteriously in Mrs. Larkall's study.

Was it any wonder, then, that she should shudder at the words in which he boasted of his sincerity? Had she been true to herself, she would have closed her ears to every word he uttered; but, she loved him. Despised him—and loved him. Almost hated him for his treachery and dissimulation—yet loved him.

"It is needless for you to repeat what I already know so well," Gertrude said, as an apology for her action. "By the way, you were at the Towers on the day I left?"

"Yes. You have heard the news, of course?"

"News?"

"Is it possible you don't know what has happened? Amy, your cousin, your bosom friend—"

"Yes, what of her?"

"She has disappeared!"

Gertrude stepped back, and looked incredulously up into the frank, open face of her lover.

"Amy been carried off?" she ejaculated.

"More likely made away with herself," said Roland, carelessly. "They'll find her, some day, in the lake, or somewhere. Why, what the deuce is the matter?"

Gertrude had staggered back to a seat, and, covering her face with her hands, sat rocking to and fro in agony.

For Amy's sake? No. For her own.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROOF OF SINCERITY.

Yes—Lady.

I am yours wholly.

Oh, no, no, not mine.

Tis not the same now, never more can be.

Colombé's Birthday.

An angry cloud rested on the brow of Roland Hershaw, as he watched the effects of his words upon Gertrude. There was a bitter feeling in his heart towards her—a feeling to which he dared not give expression in words.

"She must have listened," he thought, "she must have heard all that passed between Wolf and me. That was enough to make her dangerous, unless I can hood-wink her and draw her fangs. I would have thrown her over altogether, but for Mrs. Larkall—what should make that woman so anxious to have the right thing

done by this girl? She's not always so particular."

From which it may be inferred that some part at least of the long interview in the study, had reference to Gertrude Norman. And strong arguments had probably been used to induce the young man to act fairly and honourably towards the girl—unless, indeed, fear had prompted him to take the readiest means of silencing her.

"You must have loved Amy very much?" said Roland, after a pause.

Gertrude looked up from behind her hands.

"I did," she said, "as a sister."

"She was pretty and gentle and all that sort of thing," remarked the young man carelessly. "Nice eyes too, eh?"

Gertrude rose to her feet and cast a proud and reproachful look at him.

"Pray do not try to deceive me further, Roland," she said. "It is better that we should understand each other. You love my cousin: you have ceased to love me, if indeed, you ever really cared for me. It is you who have carried Amy away from her home—with what object, Heaven only knows. You see, I know all—know it to my bitter shame and agony."

Gertrude threw herself at her feet.

"You are wrong, Gertrude!" he cried. "I swear to you by everything that is just and holy, you are wrong. I love you truly, fondly love you. I have given my heart to you, and to you alone."

Gertrude heaved the words, her heart prompted her to hear them; but her tears told her that the man lied.

"It is too late," she said mournfully, "I know all."

"You have been deceived, darling," he cried out, with passionate earnestness. "It is a calumny, it is a falsehood. Your image only is shrined in my heart, and I am bound by vows of fidelity to you until I die."

"Would to Heaven I could believe it!" cried Gertrude. "But I have proof to the contrary that cannot be gained. Amy herself has confessed all."

Roland burst into a laugh.

"Amy!" he cried contemptuously. "The poor child! A few sugar words seem to have turned her brain. 'Tis true that I have been civil to your cousin, have paid her the compliments usual when our sex addresses yours. I have even gratified her by an occasional walk or an hour's chat in the library; but as to loving her—Gertrude, let us and this farce at once. You doubt me. Your love, of the intensity of which I have no question, prompts you to jealousy. Remonstrance, explanation will be in vain: there is but one argument that can be deemed conclusive. I am ready to make you my wife, Gertrude. Will you accept me?"

The offer was so abrupt that Gertrude could only gaze incredulously in the face of the speaker. And as she looked there all her lingering doubts melted away. How could she suspect that clear brow, those brown, luminous eyes, and the frank smile, that played about that charming mouth?

"What can I answer?" was the hurried reply.

He started up, he caught her in his arms, and pressed her to his bosom, while she, blushing, confused, but inexpressibly happy, permitted him to imprint a kiss upon her white brow.

There was no need of words.

The most studied form in which a princess ever accepted the offer of a monarch's love, could not have been more expressive than that short but impassioned embrace. It sealed the lover's appeal, and in it Gertrude forgot her fears, her doubts, her jealousies.

Only once the thought that she might still be deceived crossed the girl's mind.

Roland seemed to read it on her brow.

"Still sad, darling?" he asked.

"No, no," she answered, quickly; "but I love you so, Roland, and I am so happy, and—and—it is all real, Roland, is it not?"

"Have no fear, Gertrude," he whispered, "I will fulfil what I have promised."

"You will make me your wife?"

"Gladly. It was my hope and intention from the first. Perhaps, but for what has happened, I might have delayed this declaration; but I make it now as a proof of my sincerity—the only proof I can offer until time shall enable me to ratify the promise I now make."

"You speak of time—Gertrude said, hesitating how to proceed.

"Yes, darling, I cannot yet make you my wife. At this moment I cannot even disclose to you the real state of my affairs, my titles, my family connections, my estates, or the nature of the political work in which I am acting. It must be enough for you that, whatever my rank and position in my own country—and I am a Russian, though of English birth—I woo you as plain Roland Hershaw, and solemnly promise to redeem my word."

She could hardly tell why, but that speech made Gertrude very sad.

She had always thought of Roland as of one in her own station in life. It was as to an equal that she had given him her heart, and somehow these vague allusions to titles and to wealth frightened her. They seemed to cast a cloud over the future. True, it was not yet too big for a man's hand; but she could not disregard it.

"It is very foolish of me, Roland," she said, mournfully, "but the thought of the future before you makes me sad. I will not doubt your love or your truth; but I fear that when you become a great man, and have a wider choice, you will regret that you have tendered yourself with a poor orphan like me."

"No, I shall never regret it," he said, with a peculiar smile upon his face; "at least, I sincerely trust not. From this moment I hold myself happy in the consciousness of being one day able to make you my bride, and as pledged to do that whatever may befall."

"I shall live on the hope of that day," said Gertrude, warmly.

"You shall do more, if you will," said Roland, bending down, and speaking in a whisper, "I am ready to end all doubts, to anticipate all objections at once."

"At once?"

"Yes. Publicly I cannot yet make you mine; but a secret marriage—"

A crimson flush suffused the face and neck of the listening girl at this suggestion. It was the echo of her own thoughts, and she trembled lest she might have betrayed those thoughts even by a look.

An immediate marriage, however secretly performed, would, she knew, raise a barrier between Amy and Roland, to say nothing of other dreaded rivals, which nothing could overpass.

Still she trembled to think of it.

"Oh, Roland," she said, "Mrs. Larkall would never, never forgive me!"

"And who cares two straws for her forgiveness?" asked her lover. "By your husband's side you may defy the world."

He threw his arm round the girl's waist as he spoke, as if they were already united, both for defence and for defiance.

How long they stood conversing together, Gertrude never knew. It seemed to her but a few minutes; but it was doubtless much longer, since it sufficed them for the arrangement of many important details.

They were interrupted by the sudden bursting open of the door, and the in-rush of some twenty romping girls of every order of beauty, who had in chase, and appeared to be hunting, an unfortunate victim of the sterner sex.

The victim was a little man, dressed entirely in black, which made him look less than he really was. His hair was long and black; he had also black whiskers, resplendent in curl. The hair and the whiskers, not to mention the eyebrows, one saw at a glance, were dyed, and the little man suffered from chronic redness of the skin from the irritating effects of the dye.

Such, in appearance, was Mr. Snaggs, the dancing-master, whose devotion to his profession was only exceeded by that of his devotion to the fair sex, and more particularly to that crown and blossom of it, Mrs. Larkall.

Tradition went that Snaggs had once even dared to propose to Mrs. Larkall—to offer her his heart and kit—and that she had expressed her sense of the honour by taking him by the scruff of the neck, and dropping him over the banisters.

This might be slander. But poor Snaggs' usage from the girls was scarcely less endurable than that he was reported to have received from the principal. They worried and chafed him out of his senses almost, not refraining from, but rather delighting in dilating on the two topics on which he was most sensitive—his hair-dye, and his love for Mrs. Larkall.

As Snaggs and the girls burst into the room, they came to a dead stop, dumb with astonishment.

Gertrude Norman there, and with a man!

Such a thing was unheard-of, and they could not credit their eyes.

"Miss Norman!" cried the little dancing-master, who was the first to speak.

Gertrude looked down, overwhelmed with confusion.

"Well, sir," said Roland boldly, "and what have you to say to Miss Norman?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing, of course!" replied Snaggs, with much emphasis; "only if these goings-on are to be permitted, Mrs. Larkall's boarding-school has come to something. And I, for one—"

He stopped suddenly, and stood with his mouth wide open. A dead silence, too, fell upon the girls about him.

The effect was occasioned by nothing less than the appearance of Mrs. Larkall herself, who, walking into the room in her tasteful brocade, cast one eagle

glance around her, and then, addressing Roland, said:

"I must apologise, Mr. Hershaw, for not returning sooner; I have been detained. Will you excuse my saying that visits to pupils are usually limited to ten minutes? We shall be very happy to see you again before you leave Brighton."

The tact of these words had saved appearances. Roland felt that, and immediately prepared to leave, bidding Gertrude good-bye, with an assumed indifference which she understood.

As he passed Mrs. Larkall, that lady regarded him with a severe look.

"This is indiscreet!" she whispered. "I told Mahala to come for Gertrude in ten minutes."

"I know you did," replied the youth, with a twinkle of his left eye; "I heard you; I'm afraid my speaking to her afterwards made her forget it."

"But appearances!" cried Mrs. Larkall.

Roland whispered something in her ear in reply, and went off laughing. But Mrs. Larkall did not laugh; she turned pale, and a shiver passed through her frame.

As soon as she could escape the jesting mirth of her school companions, Gertrude flew to her own chamber.

Her eyes blazed, her face was radiant with happiness.

"He loves me! he loves me!" she cried out in the exuberance of her joy. "I will never see, or hear, or believe anything against him again while I live. To think that I should torture myself with doubts and fears and be ready to make me his wife at once—at once!"

The rapture of that thought filled her heart to overflowing.

The clouds had gone; suspicion, dread, terror, all had died away. One pang of remorse, perhaps, lingered, like the dead asp at the bottom of the charmed cup—remorse for her needless cruelty to poor Amy; but what was that, when weighed against the happiness that had suddenly come upon her?

She sat down before the glass, and gazing on the reflection of her beautiful face, gave herself up to the dream of bliss which possessed her.

By-and-bye she raised her eyes, and there in the glass she beheld a dark face peering over her left shoulder.

"Mahala!" she cried, starting and turning round.

"Yes, missy—to undress you. You think of him all night."

"Of him?"

"Oh, yes; I saw him go. They went away together," said the ayah.

"Mr. Hershaw left this house with another man?"

cried Gertrude. "Who was it?"

"Him who stole your diamond necklace, missy," sniggered Mahala, her eyes flashing with devilish enjoyment.

Gertrude clutched at the back of the chair from which she rose; her teeth chattered—her limbs trembled.

The mysterious intimacy between these men boded her nothing but evil.

She felt this instinctively, and the cup of her joy was dashed with gall and wormwood.

CHAPTER. VII.

SECRET TREASURE.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased?

Thou conjur'st that poppy and murtherest!

Browning.

MAHALA had for once spoken the truth.

During the greater part of the time spent by Roland Hershaw, at Mrs. Larkall's Boarding-school, the man, Peter Wolff, had amused himself by leaning over the railings, which edged the cliff opposite the square in which the establishment was situated, smoking his pipe.

For a long time he had been satisfied to puff out rings of smoke in a leisurely way, and to stare at the outstretched ocean; cleft by a path of silver, as the moon rose. At last he grew impatient, and knocking out the ashes of his pipe, turned his back upon the sea, and stared at the gloomy houses.

"I wonder what his little game is?" mused the fellow; "he didn't do much good among the women folks over yonder." He pointed with his thumb to indicate some place beyond the sea; "and it don't strike me as he's playing a very wise game here. However, he knows best."

He rubbed his bristly chin with the back of his hand moodily for some time. Then he muttered to himself again:

"How the dows the woman, Joanna, found him out for me's the greatest mystery I've ever known. She miles and miles away, and yet to know every turn of the road, every house and tree—"

He broke off abruptly.

The door of the school was opening, and he darted across the road and up the square, remaining under the shadow of the trees in the middle of it, till he saw Hershaw come out.

Then he joined him, and they walked away together toward the railway station.

As they walked, Roland questioned his companion.

"You have succeeded, as I hear?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And you have made every arrangement secretly and surely?"

"Nothing has been forgotten."

"And when will you take me to the house?"

"This very night."

Before midnight the two men were in London, and, in fulfilment of the promise thus given, they were standing before the door of a house in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park.

It was a lofty, handsome mansion; but standing greatly in need of repair. The stuccoed front was dropping to decay; the railings were rusty for want of paint, the steps leading to the door were green and slippery.

In answer to Wolff's ring, the door was opened by a wasted and bent old man, whose clothes hung upon his limbs as on those of a skeleton, and who shuffled and shambled about, making a noise with his mouth as if he was pined with cold, or was continually blowing invisible hot soup.

There was a faint light from a cracked lamp swinging in the hall.

Peter Wolff did not say a word.

He simply held up three fingers.

The old man repeated the motion as well as his palsied hands would permit, and then led the two visitors through the hall and up the first flight of stairs to a little ante-room, lit by a faint oil-lamp.

There he left them.

Roland noticed that the walls of this room were hung with trembling tapestry, instead of being papered, and that the ceiling was black, and polished like ebony. The lamp hung by several yards of chain from the centre of the ceiling, throwing a circle of light upon a stone table, with the twelve signs of the Zodiac inlaid in it.

"The doctor's waiting-room?" he asked.

"That's what I should call it. He gives it a more learned name. But here he is!"

A portion of the tapestry on one wall had been raised, and there stood before the visitors an elderly man, bowing and smiling.

This personage had an aspect which should have been venerable, yet somehow was not. His head was large, well-balanced, and surrounded by locks of hair perfectly white, blending with a beard of the same colour, but cut tolerably close. A scarlet fez, with a long gold tassel, rested far back on the head, in the Oriental fashion. The face of the man was bronzed, as if from travel; his eyes were of a cold, steel-blue, and glittered under shaggy eyebrows darker than the hair of the head. Perhaps it was the mouth which destroyed the effect of the face. It was very large, with thick lips; which, however, did not hide the teeth or the great gaps in them.

A dressing-gown of black velvet, and red morocco slippers, will complete the description of the man standing under the tapestry.

"Doctor Amplett!" said Wolff, by way of introduction.

"Delighted!" said the doctor, and then drew back and held the tapestry while his visitors followed him.

They found themselves almost at once in a much larger, and if possible more singular apartment. The great drawing-room of the house had been converted into a what might have been called a museum, except that the word implies something of order and arrangement, and in this place there was no pretension to anything of the kind. The roof, like that of the ante-room, was black and polished. The floor was covered with skins of magnificent animals, especially those of tigers, leopards and bears.

These constituted the carpet.

The walls were hidden by trophies of arms of all nations, stuffed birds, beasts and reptiles—none of them in cases—and curiosities collected from all parts of the globe.

At one end of the room was a table of black marble, inlaid with coloured stones, and about it stood several chairs of peculiar make. They resembled those found at Pompeii.

On the table lay a papyrus manuscript, half-unwound; and having motioned his visitors to seats, the doctor sat down near the table and took this roll.

"I have been reading," he said, in the same tone, as if continuing a conversation, "about the Yezides—the devil-worshippers you know! Do you believe that the sect still exists?"

"In one sense—yes!" replied Roland, to whom the question was put in a pointed way.

"Yes; yes, I know. We all, more or less, sacrifice at the altar of Evil; but as a sect?"

"In the East, perhaps," replied the young man, impatiently.

"Of course," said the doctor; "I mean there. The East is to me the world. It is the source of light, of civilization, in which this miserable Europe only glimmers. Ah, sir, I've seen some strange things there. Talk of mesmerism, clairvoyance, magic—it is all child's play!"

Peter Wolf noted that his companion suddenly grew interested.

"Are half the stories one hears of these things true?" Roland asked.

"The truth is not told; men are afraid to tell it!" was the doctor's answer. "They would not be believed, and who cares to bear the brand of a liar?"

"We have heard," said the young man, "of those who possess the power of seeing and knowing what is passing hundreds of miles away!"

"Yes; thousands!"

"But do you believe that if a person so gifted were at this moment—may I in—"

"Germany!" suggested Wolff.

Roland Hershaw turned upon him with an angry scowl.

"Well, Germany be it!" he said trying to appear indifferent; "and any action was passing in this room, that they could describe that action to those about them?"

"I do believe it!" replied the doctor; "that is, if it was a matter affecting their sympathies very strongly. I have known cases in which extraordinary discoveries have been made through this means, but," he added, perceiving that his visitor looked uneasy and disquieted, "that was in the East!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Roland—it was a forced laugh, though—"that wonderful East! If one was to believe half one hears of it, the 'Arabian Nights' would be common-place indeed! But to turn to a more important subject—your patient. How is she?"

"Better."

"Perceptibly so?"

"Not to your eyes. She is stronger. Strength of body gives strength of mind. If we restore the tone of the one, we may affect that of the other."

"She is still idiotic?"

"Yes; hopelessly so, for the present. There is something peculiar in her case!"

"It is said to be the effect of fright," remarked Roland.

"Simple fright would not have produced such strong results. It was something more. Well, well, let us hope that some day she will be able to tell us herself what it was."

"You think that possible?" demanded Roland, eagerly.

"More than that—it is probable. But come, you would see her."

He took up a small silver lamp, ignited it by simply blowing upon the wick, which was of a scarlet colour. Before those who witnessed the feat could get over their surprise, they found themselves in an apartment or ward, fitted up for the reception of an invalid.

There was a bed in the room.

Upon the pillow of it reposed the pale cheek of poor Amy Dearlove Robart. Her eyes were closed. The pillow was covered with the profuse tangles of her exquisite gold-tinted hair.

Roland could not resist an exclamation at the sight. The sound of his voice woke the sleeper.

Her eyelids unclosed, she started up, and gazing full at Roland, uttered his name.

"Hark! she knows me," he said.

"Nonsense," cried the doctor, pulling him back.

"But she called me by my name!"

"She is a parrot with one word—'Roland,'" urged the doctor.

But the young man was not to be satisfied. With a fierceness and impetuosity very foreign to his ordinary manner, he thrust the strange doctor aside, and throwing himself on his knees by the couch, seized one white hand, as it lay on the coverlid.

"Amy!" he cried, with a passionate earnestness very different to the tone in which he had addressed Gertrude Norman, but a few hours before. "Oh, Amy, my darling, my darling! You know me! surely you know me! It is I, Roland, your lover who speaks to you. Have you forgotten my face, and my voice? Amy, Amy! Oh, Heaven help me! This is too horrible!"

She had not heard his words. Her eyes were half-closed again, and he recoiled from the couch with a despairing groan.

"And you call this—better?" he exclaimed, turning fiercely upon Amplett, who during the scene had exchanged menacing glances with Peter Wolff. "When, in Heaven's name, will she be well?"

"It may be years first," was the answer.

Roland took the doctor by the hand and drew him on one side.

"You do this for money," he said, "and you think the longer she is here the more you may demand? You will deny it, but it is so. Now, look you, here is a hint on which you will do well to act. I love this woman to-day, may love her for a month, a year—such things have been, you know. Now, while the fever lasts, you cannot ask a price I will not pay—when it's over—well, you'll find it hard to squeeze a guinea from my purse."

Amplett only smiled, and the three returned to the great room which they had just quitted.

Once there the doctor could not keep his eyes from the scroll, which still lay upon the marble table.

Roland noticed this.

"We will not detain you," he said. "I did not doubt but my orders had been secretly and surely performed; but my anxiety as to your patient obliged me to come here. We will leave you to your devil-worship controversy. By the way, is it likely to be profitable?" he asked, laughing.

"Very," was the sober reply.

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that these manuscripts, while professing to narrate one thing, often refer to another. For instance, what to you and me appears a mere tale of magic and romance, was, to the initiated, a revelation of some priceless truth or some secret treasure!"

At the words "secret treasure," Roland Hershaw looked at the face of the strange being before him with an expression of awe, as if he half-believed that the man had the power of reading the secrets of his very soul.

But he did not speak.

He simply grasped the hand of the doctor, and while their eyes met, a motion of his shoulder intimated that he did not care to discuss that subject before Peter Wolff.

"We shall meet again, doctor," he said, in an easy tone.

"Shortly?" asked the doctor.

Roland nodded his head, and he and his companion took their leave.

It seemed to Peter that, as they quitted the house, his companion was strangely excited. He could not tell why, unless the sight of Amy Robart had produced a wondrous effect on him, an effect far more startling than Peter had ever seen woman produce on man.

What had been said about secret treasure, Peter had only regarded as so much moonshine. He would hardly have credited that, in consequence of it, such a practical fellow as Roland Hershaw did not close his eyes in sleep that night.

But then there was a reason for it.

(To be continued.)

A WOUNDED BIRD.

How slight a thing to stir so strong a chord!

A simple atom, formed of golden grace—

Lying here passive, trembling in my hand—

Its wild brown eyes in terror on my face.

I watched it with exquisitely sad pain;

Its crimson breast torn with life's struggling

breath.

Its slender feet around my fingers cling.

Its deep eye deepens at the sight of death.

Oh, dying oriole! but yesterday,

Your sweet, clear voice made heaven amid the

trees;

The very sky leaned blue down to hear,

And bear aloft your summer melodies.

Dead! Only in thy life a simple bird!

The world would laugh to see me give thee tears;

So let them! Sweet eyes, golden wings, mute voice,

And unsung songs, rest through the coming

years. C. A.

STATUES IN ST. PAUL'S.—It generally happens that statues get positions in St. Paul's where they cannot be seen to advantage; their faces are often turned away from the light, and they stand in places so dim as to lose all that the carvers relied on from the effect of light and shade. The uninteresting character of modern sculpture—alleged to be due to the difficulty of dealing with modern costume, but rather arising from unceasing attempts to impart a classic motive to that with which it will not harmonize—becomes doubly apparent when its examples are situated as the lately-placed statues in St. Paul's. The last arrival in this cathedral is Mr. Noble's statue of Mountstuart Elphinstone. Both in character and position this work suffers in the way indicated. The figure holds the indispensable scroll and pen; the equally indispensable cloak falls over the shoulders in drapery of quasi-antique character. The coat and trousers—the arrangement of which is the problem set before modern artists, failure in solving which should hardly be tolerated—lack freedom and spirit of treatment, notably

because an effort has been made to show muscular development where it is not naturally perceptible. The face has the look of a likeness, but, being turned away from the light, much of its execution is indiscernible.

WHY KING WON THE FIGHT.—"It is said that there never was a war, great or small, since the siege of Troy, in which a woman was not mixed up. The battle between Heenan and King was not an exception to the rule. Venus and Mars were both invoked by the combatants; but the fair and too often sickle goddess had the best of it on this occasion, and Mars, in the shape of the Yankee Giant was compelled to succumb to her influence. It now seems that King had for some time before the fight cast sheepish eyes on the daughter of a retired pugilist, who, like the more fortunate of the fraternity, had been enabled to retire into private life, and keep a public-house. The young lady is fair to look upon, and King, being a handsome young fellow, made overtures to the 'parient' for his consent. This, however, as the story goes, was made contingent upon the success of King in the battle of Wadhurst. The extraordinary prowess of the gladiator on that occasion was, no doubt, stimulated by the hope of obtaining the smiles of beauty in addition to the stakes."

NAPOLEON SCARED BY A CLOCK.

THE course of victory continued incessantly, and so early as October 25, Napoleon wrote from Potsdam to Joseph: "I have crushed the Prussian monarchy; I will crush the Russians when they arrive; and I do not fear the Austrians."

In the royal palaces he found everything just as the legitimate owners had left it. So extraordinary was the prevailing stupidity, that no attempt had even been made to save the private papers of the royal family, and Napoleon was able to examine the letters of Queen Louise.

In the study of Frederick the Great, at Sans Souci, he had, or affected to have, an attack of reverence. "Gentlemen," he said to his suite, as he took off his hat, "this is a spot that merits our respect." But he yielded to the vanity of sending the sword of the mighty dead as a trophy to Paris; and when the Prussians asked for it back, in 1814, it came out that Jerome had been so dishonourable as to have the revered relic destroyed.

On one of the nights that Napoleon spent at Charlottenburg his slumbers were disturbed. The divine comedy of his history also has comic interludes. In Frederick William's dining-room, close to the conqueror's bed-chamber, there stood a large musical clock, which admirably imitated a band of trumpets. At midnight the row began, trumpet echoed through the palace, the servants, the adjutants, Napoleon himself leaped out of bed, and every one believed in a surprise. But everything was quiet again, and no one could make out where all the trumpeters were. Sentries were posted, a party of the servants and adjutants remained up, and at one o'clock there was the same row again, this time in one of the rooms. They rushed in, and the innocent clock was detected before the tune was ended. Napoleon the Great, the *crusader* of the Prussian monarchy, sleeping in the palace of the Queen of Prussia, and frightened by a musical clock.—*Bentley's Miscellany*.

TIM BARCLAY and Perkins of Vienna, Herr Dreyer, died suddenly a few days ago. He was the best producer of Vienna beer, and died worth from 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 (£800,000). His heir is his only son, a boy of fourteen. The boy, after finishing school, is to come for three years to England, to Barclay and Perkins's establishment, work there till the age of twenty-one, and then assume the patrimony.

It is very likely, judging from Mr. Millais's evidence, that he will point the way to certain necessary reforms in the Royal Academy, for he is rather independent in that way. Old John Turner had a high regard for the Academy, thought it could do no wrong, and considered the man who said a word against it as little better than a heretic. "He stabbed his mother," he said to Maclean one day, when that able artist was speaking a good word for the wayward and unfortunate Haydon; "I will do nothing for him." Maclean went away wondering, and never dreamed that the Royal Academy was the mother referred to. All the art-world know that Haydon gave the Academy and its officers many a hard but ineffectual blow. The late accomplished painter, Mulready, was also much attached to the Royal Academy, and really seemed to think he owed everything to it, rather than to his brilliant genius and indomitable industry, painting hard nearly up to the age of seventy-four, when he died, having suffered from disease of the heart over forty of those years. A monument is to be erected to his memory.



FORT SUMTER.

Our engraving represents the remains of this once defiant fortress. On the right is seen a bank of earth and debris in shadow. This is what is left of the south-east face, while above it, in high light, stands the broken and crumbling north-east face. In the centre, and adjacent thereto, the flag peers above the mangled portions of the gorge wall. Above the line formed by the top of the debris of the prostrate masonry are observable, in shadow, the jagged features of the north-west face.

The high mound on the extreme left, forms the upper portion to a bombproof, which, like the saucy battleflag, is being rapidly shot away, losing its identity in the pulverised masses around it.

The destruction of any object, no matter of what kind, as the effect of such a war as has now, for three years, been carried on in America, cannot to either party be a subject of very pleasing congratulation, when hostilities have ceased. The memories it recalls, are not such as have a tendency to enlarge our perceptions of human happiness. In the estimation of some, these may be encompassed by visions of glory. But even glory has its drawbacks, whether dazzling in the future, or shining over the retrospective.

Fort Sumter has fallen, but Charleston has not; neither has the South been yet conquered. Whenever this is done, however, the warriors of the North are to turn their attention to England, and make her render up an account of her conduct towards them during the progress of this internecine war. They are then to emancipate Ireland; give it a new government; conquer Britain, and limit her power by the superiority of their own! Mighty feats—splendid in the imagination, but in the reality—absurd!

Do the North Americans really believe that such ridiculous braggardism has any other effect upon the healthy and rubicund face of Britain, than to raise a passing smile of pity? Do they really think that their threats, however often, and however frequently repeated, produce the slightest degree of intimidation on this side of the broad Atlantic? The very thought is preposterous. But suppose that they and the British did go to war, and suppose that the Americans were the victors. What then? Would Britain be any the less great than she is now? Would her name, her honour, and her renown, be wrested from her for ever, and would she no longer be such as she has hitherto been? The Americans forget that they are not now living in the mediæval ages; that fighting now-a-days is not a mere hand-to-hand encounter between individual knights clad in armour, and without other means of offence beyond such as the strength of their thews and sinews give them. War is now reduced to a science, in which personal prowess has comparatively little to do. It is not the sabre, but the rifle, that decides the conflict; not the bow and arrow, but the powder and bullet, although the close quarters of the heady fight still takes a part with the rest, in a general contest.

We, ourselves, are no advocates for war, and Britain, as a nation, has certainly not very lately discovered

[PRESENT APPEARANCE OF FORT SUMTER.]

any disposition to enter upon hostilities with any power whatever; but if this be construed by the North Americans as the result of fear, they are as much mistaken in that, as they have been in most, if not all of their heroic vaticinations respecting their speedily subjugating or annihilating the people of the Southern States. Britain is not easily frightened, but she will not suffer the mere effervescence of American bravado, to be the cause of her sending her sons to slaughter, injuring her mercantile relations and crippling her commerce.

Before the North Americans talk so glibly of conquering Britain and liberating Ireland—as if the Irish were enslaved—let them complete the work they have in hand. Their valour has been, and is now being, tried sorely enough, and so far as it has displayed itself, does not seem to have filled the world with any extraordinary sentiment of wonder. Indeed, we are of opinion that had the Northerners been equally matched, and had had no more resources than the Southerners to carry on the war, they would have long ago succumbed; and if the Congress of the Seceded States truly expresses their sentiments, the South was never more firmly resolved on achieving its independence than at the present time. The spirit of its people is still unbroken, and its confidence in ultimate success remains unchanged. The population of the North regard with complacency their numerical superiority over their opponents, and the much greater extent of their resources, and therefore conclude that if they only fight long enough they must prove victorious. And so probably they will; but it must not be forgotten that the North has already reached and passed the maximum of efficiency which its armies are destined to attain during the present civil war, and to indifferent observers, the prize for which it has striven, now seems every day to be receding further and further from its grasp.

If anything is to be deplored more deeply than another in this conflict of peoples, it is, perhaps, the spirit manifested on both sides, and which has become darkened to the very perfection of the blackest hate. Whatever may be the result of the contest, it must bequeath to both belligerents the fruits of an enduring animosity. They can never cordially unite again; but as the country is happily large enough to admit of division amongst even more than two great nations, it may, after all, become a subject of gratulation to different peoples, that the Union has been severed, otherwise it might have become insupportable by its pride and power. If so, in place of being the harbinger and representative, as in some measure it presumed to be, of universal freedom, it might have become, both the moral and physical despot of nations, less powerful than itself, perhaps, but equally worthy of an independent existence and an honourable place on the chart of the civilized portions of the globe.

PRINCES DINING OUT.—A few days ago, Prince Alfred and Prince William of Hesse paid a visit to the Ulster cooking depot for the working-classes, established by Miss Catherine Sinclair, at Queensferry Street, Edinburgh. The princes, without being

recognized, entered the crowded dining-hall, and were served with the usual 4½d. dinner, supplied to frequenters of the depot. After dinner, they visited the kitchen of the establishment, and before leaving, expressed their entire satisfaction with all the arrangements. The depot is self-supporting, and is visited by about 500 persons daily.

RESPECTING DONKEYS.

A ROMAN senator is said to have paid for a single donkey 400,000 sesterces, which at the usual computation would be £3,200 of our money. "I am not sure," says Pliny, "whether this did not exceed the price ever given for any other animal. The profit," he adds, "arising from these animals, exceeds that arising from the richest estate; it is well known that in Celtiberia there are she-donkeys which have produced to their owners as much as 400,000 sesterces"—upwards of £3,200 English.

As an article of food, donkey's flesh, as might be expected from its cleanly habits, and wholesome, though at times coarse diet, is excellent eating. Mæcenas, an epicure and gastronome, delighted in having a young donkey served up at his table, and we may presume that more than once the delicate viand gratified the fastidious taste of Horace himself, and perhaps enjoyed the esteem of the imperial Augustus. But its reputation belongs also to a later era.

At the time Malta, then in the possession of the French, was closely blockaded by a British and Neapolitan squadron, who would suffer no supplies to enter, the inhabitants, not indeed destitute of bread, lived upon horseflesh, dogs, cats, donkeys, and rats.

The donkey's flesh was held excellent; the epicures of Valetta preferred it to the best beef, or even veal. Stewed, roasted, or boiled, it was in every way capital. The gourmand's delight was in a fat donkey of from three to four years old, fed on biscuit and milk. Then was the flesh eminently nutritious, the fat of a most seducing yellow. We ask, did any men ever sit down with appetite to a cooked mule?

And here fitly we may observe that the inimitable Bologna sausage, that "great chieftain of the pudding race," owes its unsurpassable excellence to the fact that the chief ingredient in its composition is not derived from the ill-mannered, grabbing, fustid pig wallowing in filth and finding in filth his food, but from the docile donkey, cleanly in his habits, cleanly in his diet, and destitute of all gluttonous propensities whatever.

When the Persians celebrated the death of Ali's sons, they used to set a figure of straw, meant to represent Omar, on a donkey's back, and having paraded the mockery through the city, would burn the figure and kill the poor donkey.

Muratori tells, as a mighty good joke, a still more horrible story, narrated by Peter Damian, respecting one of the antipopes, John, at the end of the tenth century, who, falling into the hands of his enemies, had his eyes bored out, his ears cut off, his tongue cut out, and then, seated on a donkey with his face to the tail, which he was required to hold in his hand, he was made to traverse the streets of Rome.

although tongueless; to proclaim at intervals his guilt. We justly esteem as barbarous the cruel punishment inflicted on the luckless pretender to the Pontificate, but also vain would ask what was the donkey's guilt that he was compelled to share the pretender's disgrace?

"I recollect," says M. Simond, in his amusing book on Switzerland, "to have seen in France, that land of gallantry, a woman and a donkey harnessed together to the same plough, and the tattered peasant behind stimulating his team with a seemingly impartial whip!" We count this also a degradation of the donkey, for a wretch capable of employing his wife as a beast of draught forfeited his title to manhood and all the rights and prerogatives thereto appertenant, right of supremacy over the humbler orders of creation amongst the rest. It was, therefore, the wretchedness of this unhappy donkey, to be commanded and chastised by a greater beast than himself.

THE TWO BRIDEGROOMS.

"I beg your pardon."

I had been walking along in a brown study, and the button of my coat had caught in the fringe of her shawl. She smiled sweetly as I disengaged it.

Heavens! what eyes those were, and what a lovely face they beamed from! Our eyes met in a mutual glance, the first, in all probability the last. She passed on. My features, if seen at all, were forgotten the next moment—hers were indelibly fixed upon the tablet of my memory, never to be erased.

She resumed the conversation with her lady companion which this slight accident had interrupted. I heard these words:

"It is 'Il Trovatore' to-night. I would not miss it for the world."

She would be at the opera to-night. I might behold those features again. I resolved to attend.

You will think, perhaps, that I was foolish or mad. I was both. What result, did I anticipate from a second glance at that lovely face? What result could I anticipate? What was there in common between us more than in the thousand strangers who meet in the streets of a great city and pass on their way unknowing and unknown? I was foolish to waste a second thought upon her—I was mad to resolve to see her again.

Her appearance and apparel proclaimed her a daughter of wealth, and I, let me acknowledge what it would be vain to attempt to conceal, was poverty personified.

It was not that I was poor alone, that was not half my misfortune—I had the education and tastes of a man of means. My father, a poor country schoolmaster, thinking education the best attribute a man can possess, had spared no pains with mine. An earnest, faithful father, he had dribbled out his life in the performance of his duties and died, leaving me an orphan at the early age of fifteen. My mother, I can scarcely remember her pale face, died years before.

The village in which my father taught school was near S—. I had made the acquaintance of an old sea-captain who resided there. I scarcely remember how we became so familiar, but I have a faint idea that he was a distant connection of my mother's, who used to send me to his house upon different errands. When my father's death threw me friendless upon the world, his doors opened to receive me. An illiterate man himself—most of his life having been passed at sea—my knowledge of penmanship and arithmetic was of great service to him. I soon became his factotum.

Two years passed rapidly and pleasantly beneath his roof. But this quiet, easy life was not to continue. Tales of fortunes made in those lands to which he had formerly sailed so influenced the mind of Captain Junbold, that he resolved to make one more voyage. He had retired upon a competence, but he was not satisfied—*who is in this world?*—so he sold his comfortable home, turned all he possessed into ready cash, purchased a fine vessel and loaded her for the East India trade.

I was not forgotten, the post of supercargo was assigned to me. We set sail with a favourable breeze, and my heart was buoyant with the thought of traversing the mighty ocean and gazing upon another world.

The voyage was prosperous beyond measure. The fortune we both expected was realized, and the bow of the brave vessel cleft the waves on her homeward voyage—a home she was doomed never to reach.

A storm arose, in which we were wrecked. I know not how many escaped. I saw the captain perish before my eyes, without the power to save him, and then the seething waves bore away the spar to which I clung.

I was picked up by an English vessel bound for

China, after floating hopelessly in the water for two nights and a day. It was six months before I regained my full health and strength.

I will not weary your patience with a recital of my struggles and privations in foreign lands, still striving for that fortune which had first lured me forth. It was like chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. Let it suffice that at the expiration of eight years I recrossed the ocean. My first visit was to London. I was just twenty-five years of age, healthy and strong, with just one hundred pounds in my pocket.

Promenading Pall Mall, I had become entangled in a lady's shawl—the said lady being a black-eyed girl of eighteen summers. And I was in love—madly, desperately in love. Well done for an almost penniless adventurer—one who had been Fortune's football for eight long years.

I laughed at my own folly. I tried to reason myself out of this mad infatuation. The result was that after tea I attired myself in my best black suit, purchased a pair of white kid gloves, and went to the opera.

The audience was resplendent with elegant head-dresses and open hoods. My eyes took in the circle and roamed at large over the vast assemblage of human beings. I saw many fair faces, many bright eyes, but not the face and eyes that I had come to see.

The first act of the opera was an inflation—I never had any ear for ornamental music, the simple ballad pleased me far better—but I bore it like a martyr.

Between the acts I suddenly beheld her I sought. Oh, how resplendent she was! Her toilette was in most exquisite taste, and she dominated the circle who surrounded her—a very queen of beauty.

"Lovely!" I murmured.

"Lovely, indeed!"

I had uttered my thought unconsciously aloud. Was it an echo? No. I turned at the sound of a strange voice. A gentleman was sitting beside me. Our eyes met.

"I do not wonder at your admiration," he said; "few men can withstand the radiance of that beauty."

I felt the hot blood flush up to my very temples. My secret had been discovered. I sat like a school-boy caught munching an apple.

I examined my interlocutor curiously. He was a little, dapper man, with sleek, black hair, carefully brushed towards the crown to cover a bald spot only too apparent; mutton-chop whiskers, a sharp, gray eye, with bushy brows, a thin, straight nose, and a square, retreating chin. He was attired in full opera costume. His white-gloved hands were as small as a woman's.

He smiled pleasantly at my embarrassment, and played with his massive watch-seals.

"A nice prize that for some young man," he continued; "a happy fellow he'll be who gets her."

"I envy him!" I exclaimed. I could not help it, though I would have recalled the words the moment they were spoken.

"You do! Then perhaps you would like to be the happy man?"

I stared at him aghast. There was a strange expression in his face, and for a moment, though I am not superstitious, I did him the honour to think that he might be that subtle personage who is said to have the supreme command in the lower regions.

"How can that be possible?" I gasped, feeling it incumbent upon me to say something.

"Do you wish it?" he demanded, never taking that sharp eye off me for a moment.

"With my whole soul!" I answered, for he drew the words from me as a lawyer does from an unwilling witness at a cross-examination.

"Then you shall marry her!" he said, in a deliberate and conclusive manner.

I need not say that I was astonished—more, I was thunderstruck.

"I beg your pardon," I said, at length, "but are you her father?"

"No."

"Her uncle?"

"No."

"Any relative?"

"No, not the slightest."

"Then, by what means—"

"That is my secret, which I will explain if we come to an understanding. In the first place, if I can put it in your power to marry that girl, will you do so?"

"I will."

"In the next, will you accompany me and indulge me with an hour's conversation?"

"At your service," I replied at once. Had he been the devil himself, as I had more than once strongly suspected, I should have made him the same reply.

We left the opera together. He led me towards the park, and very little was said until we were seated upon one of the benches.

"Do you smoke?"

I replied that I sometimes indulged in that vice.

He took out a handsome case from his pocket and handed it to me. I selected one of the cigars it contained—a choice brand—and he furnished me with a light. Then, lighting one for himself, he began the strange conversation I am about to narrate.

"I like to smoke while I talk," he said, puffing away vigorously; "I think it improves the ideas. Now, listen to me, young man, and follow my instructions, and I will place in your hands the two most desirable articles this world contains—woman and wealth."

I was breathless with attention. He took a few more puffs at his cigar, watched the smoke ascend for a moment, and then proceeded.

"Let us understand each other thoroughly at the start. I am a pretty good judge of character. I think I have gauged you about right, but I may be mistaken, as when men have been before me. To the proof: you are a stranger in London, unknown, poor, friendless, with a mind above the station which poverty compels you to endure."

Surely there was something more than mortal about this man.

"I see, by your looks, that I have hit near the truth. Tell me your name and history—no reservations; let me have the truth. It can do you no hurt, and it may do you much good."

I told him my name—Edgar Ravellia—and, without reservation, laughed at once into my history.

"Good!" he muttered, half-aloud, more to himself than to me; "there is more than chance in this—it is Destiny. Do you know the lady you were gazing at so earnestly to-night?"

"I do not. I never saw her but once before," I replied.

"Ah, when?" he asked, quickly.

I recounted the little adventure with the shawl. His face became grave.

"Do you think she would recognize you again?"

"I do not. She scarcely looked at me."

"Good!" he exclaimed again. "Though still I do not see that it would interfere with our plan, even if she did. So much for preliminaries: now for the point of the matter. This young lady, who has taken your susceptible heart by storm, is Carmelyte Wilmot, the only daughter and only child of Dunmore Wilmot, one of our merchant princes. She is his sole heiress; besides which she holds in her own right fifty thousand pounds left to her by her mother, now deceased."

An heiress, as I had surmised. My heart sank at the intelligence. What hope was there for me to win her? True, I have heard how maidens sprung from kings have stooped from their high spheres; but those occasions have been very rare in the world's history. Yet this strange man beside me had promised to make her mine. He seemed to read what was passing in my mind.

"You look blank, my young friend," he said.

"What! does your courage fail you at the very threshold of our enterprise?"

"Show me the shadow of a chance to make her mine," I cried, "and you shall have no cause to doubt my courage or my ability to perform the task allotted me."

"No wonder you doubt my power to fulfil my promise, because you cannot understand the means by which I intend to work." He glanced cautiously around; no one was in sight: the Mall was deserted. "My name is Junius Silverthorn. I am a banker—supposed to be worth a million. If my debts were paid to-morrow, I should not be worth a penny. You see, I trust you with a secret that would wreck my ruin. My credit is still good, but every day I look for the crash, which must come, sooner or later. I had a nephew, who went to California, I furnished the means to work a mine. He failed there, and went to Australia. Fortune favoured him there, and he prospered. The first time I heard from him, he sent me quite a sum in gold. It helped my credit wonderfully. The next time I heard of him he was dead. I dared not reveal this intelligence, and therefore concealed it. I saw you as you entered the opera. I was astonished—I thought the dead had returned to life. I followed you, and sat down beside you. I examined you minutely, and my astonishment increased. Is form and feature are the very image of my nephew. Do you comprehend my scheme now? I will introduce you to society as my nephew, just returned from Australia. You will be thought wealthy, and be well received. I will introduce you, and take care that your appearance shall correspond with your assumed character. You shall have the means to woo the beautiful Carmelyte, and I feel confident that you will win her."

"Why are you so confident?" I asked, with some misgiving. I confess I had not the same assurance of success that seemed to animate him.

"Tut, man!" he cried, impatiently; "do you pretend to be ignorant of your own advantages? That

tall, straight form, and handsome face of yours are enough to subdue the heart of most women. Then your bronzed complexion, and Raffaele beard give you the romantic appearance of a hero of a novel. All you want is the stamp of a good family name to pass current in our best society, and that I offer you. Come, is it a bargain—will you henceforth be my nephew, Silas Silverthorn?"

Just early upon the world's current, and obliged to struggle hard to keep my head above its surface, I had learned one great lesson. Men seldom do anything without a motive. Disinterested actions are seldom performed—man works for his own selfish ends. Now, what was the motive of this man, aristocrat, although trembling on the verge of bankruptcy, in befriending a poor, unknown adventurer? Why should he give me the means of securing the hand of a young and beautiful heiress? His motive might be a sinister one. I thought so, at all events. It was necessary to know it before committing myself to his guidance.

I questioned him, but he interrupted me, having read my thoughts as before.

"I knew what you would ask," he said, smiling and showing through his thin lips his sharp, white teeth. "A few words will explain the cause which leads me thus to befriend an utter stranger. My motive is mercenary to a degree. I want money. Your extraordinary likeness to my nephew, and the discovery of your passion, suggested the scheme to obtain it. What I propose is a fair business transaction. You are to sign a bond of five thousand pounds payable to me thirty days after your marriage with Carmelyte Wilmot."

"That five thousand pounds to be paid out of her money?" I asked.

"Precisely."

"This was a 'fair business transaction,' with a vengeance. A villainous scheme to entrap and rob a wealthy girl."

"Do you think this altogether honest?" I ventured to suggest.

He laughed scornfully.

"Why not?" he replied. "Who would accuse me of dishonesty in charging five per cent. for shaming a note? Is it not an accommodation to the man who wants the money, and is he not willing to pay for that accommodation? If a man were to tell you that he would place a treasure in your hands on the simple condition of receiving one-half its value, would you not accept the offer?"

"Not if he were a thief, and that treasure was another's property," I replied, bluntly. "I was tired of this straw splitting."

He did not grow angry, as I thought he would, but laughed again, in his quiet, sardonic way, his sharp, white teeth glistening like pearls in the moonlight.

"We are young, romantic, and all that sort of thing," he apostrophised, "and we have scruples of conscience. Moreover, we are in love, and self-abnegation is the great virtue of that creed." He turned suddenly upon me, as if to magnetise me with those glittering, deep-set eyes. "Hark you, my young friend, were you worth a hundred thousand, would you not give half of it to make the poor little Carmelyte all your own?"

"Freely!" I cried, impulsively.

"Are you worth less to her than she to you? I tell you, and I have no wish to flatter, you are a king to all the foplings who dance attendance on her steps and try to win her smiles. There is not one amongst them who does not seek to win her gold through her. There is not one amongst them who, if that gold were rift from her, would not desert her, flying from poverty as men avoid the plague. You alone would seek her for herself, and your pure heart, untrammelled by petty, sordid vices of society, is richly worth to her one-half of all her wealth. What, young, full of life and health and strength, and handsome as Adonis! I tell you, sir, Carmelyte Wilmot will thank me on her bended knees for giving her such a husband; and you, when you have kissed the honey from her dewy lips, and pillowed that fair head upon your breast, you will hold her cheap at five thousand pounds."

My blood, tingling in my veins, mounted to my brain, and all my scruples vanished. The compact was made—beneath that clear sky, silvered by the moonlight—a compact which, in its fulfilment, might involve the ruin of a young, fair girl. We parted, and, for the first time in my life, I knew what it was to feel like a villain.

On the morrow I went, with my baggage, to the house of Junius Silverthorn, as if I had just arrived in London. I had died, and was born again. My past life was a sealed book, never again to be opened. Edgar Marelin had ceased to exist—henceforth I was to be known only as Silas Silverthorn.

I must confess the new life that opened before me was a pleasant one. Freely supplied by Mr. Silverthorn with money, received into the best society as an

equal, courted and flattered on every hand, I began to enjoy existence with a zest hitherto unknown to me. This great change from a life of uneasy, restless drudgery, was a foretaste of that heaven which we all hope to see.

You will wonder, perhaps, that my brain was not turned by this sudden change, and I found incapable of retaining my new position. You must remember that I had seen much of the world, and being thrown so early on my own resources, my mind had become self-sustaining, and I had confidence in myself created by many vicissitudes encountered and overcome. I turned aside from the many temptations that beset my path, and strove to be what I pretended, a true gentleman in word and deed.

The fraud I was acting preyed upon my conscience, notwithstanding the many sophistries I brought forward to hush its still small voice. Carmelyte was the star towards which I steered my course, and whenever I thought of casting off the mask I wore, her image rose before me, filling my veins with fire, my brain with madness, and I felt I could not forego the hope to make her mine.

I had been introduced to her in due form and became a welcome guest at her father's house. My visits increased in frequency, and soon, not a day passed without my seeing her. She had not recognized me. Instead of being gratified at this, my vanity was wounded. She had cast one single glance upon me, and forgotten it—that glance had fettered me a slave for ever.

I became the companion of her walks, her rides, until the gossip lifted their eyebrows with a strange significance, and whispered together. I had distanced all my rivals—I could plainly see the preference she gave me; but was it love? I trembled to ask the question. The very intensity of my love made me a coward. If I had loved her at first, before I knew her, how was that love increased when I discovered the wealth of her well-stored mind, the amiability of her disposition! I would smile at this, and say "a girl is ever perfect in her lover's eyes;" but I affirm to you, soberly and solemnly, that if ever an angel descended to earth to grace the form of woman, that angel was Carmelyte Wilmot.

Accident has a strange bearing upon our lives—the merest trifle decides a destiny. The truth I burned to discover was revealed to me by accident. I was driving her out one day, when the horse took a sudden fright and ran away with us. She clung to me in alarm, with an endearing phrase which even now rings in my ears—it turned my sinews to iron, my fingers closed over the reins with an unyielding grasp, guiding the frightened animal along the road over which he dashed with headlong speed, and at the end of ten minutes reined him in, covered with sweating perspiration, trembling and subdued.

"You are safe," I cried triumphantly, turning to my pale companion.

"Thank Heaven!" she exclaimed fervently. "Oh, I was so afraid we should be dashed to pieces. How strong you are!"

"Your danger gave me strength. I thought only of your safety, and that thought made me strong."

"And I thought only of you—if you had been injured I should never have ceased to regret it."

The hot blood mounted to my temples—our eyes met—a moment only—the next, hers were modestly veiled beneath their long, silken lashes. The secret was told.

"You love me, dear Carmelyte?"

"Yes, dear Silas."

My brain reeled, and objects swam before me. Had the horse taken fright again—I verily believe I should have driven him to the stars!

The ride home was a delicious dream.

Affairs progressed rapidly towards a conclusion. Junius Silverthorn, as my uncle, demanded the hand of Carmelyte from her father, and I was accepted as her suitor.

The wedding-day was fixed.

It was arranged that the ceremony should be performed in a quiet, unostentatious manner, as I desired, at the house of Junius Silverthorn, at which apartments had been prepared for our residence.

You will think this was kindness in Mr. Silverthorn. It was only precaution. I had signed a bond to pay him five thousand pounds when Carmelyte Wilmot became my wife, and he did not wish to lose sight of me until that bond was paid.

When all was completed and the prize nearly within my grasp, then did I truly realize what a villainous act I was about to commit. My brain was nearly crazed by contending emotions. One moment I resolved to see Carmelyte and tell her all, but the next the thought that disclosure would turn her love to scorn and loathing, restrained me. Better be anything than the object of her hate. I could not resign her.

The day before our marriage I sought to probe her mind, and ascertain what her sentiments would be in

case of a discovery of the fraud I had perpetrated upon her. It was dangerous ground to tread, for one false step might awaken suspicion and precipitate me into ruin.

We had been laying plans for the future, as lovers will do, building airy castles amidst golden clouds.

"You love me now, Carmelyte," I said, "because I am your equal in wealth and station, but if any unforeseen accident should deprive me of both and reduce me to poverty do you think your love could survive the shock?"

She looked hurt and drew herself back from my encircling arm.

"Silas," she replied, plaintively, "your words are cruel—but you do not mean them in earnest; you are but jesting. Yet such words grate harshly upon my ears and sound unkindly coming from your lips. I love you for yourself alone, and so long as you preserve the character of an honest, upright man, I shall never cease to love you."

I winced at these words: they were like hot iron on an open wound. She laid her hand gently upon my arm.

"Be not offended," she continued, "I would not wound your feelings, though you have wounded mine; you need not excuse yourself; I know it was unintentional. You sought to try me, that is all. I do not think we need fear poverty, for whatever I have shall be freely yours; but if we should be reduced to penury, your love at least will be left me, and you shall never hear a murmur from my lips."

And I was forced to deceive this noble girl! Heaven help me! I could not resign her, although her love was now at the forfeit of honour and self-esteem. I pressed the subject no further. A kiss restored our former pleasant understanding.

The wedding-day was ushered in by glorious sunlight and fresh, balmy breezes. The heavens smiled propitiously on our union.

Our small party, consisting of the minister, who was to perform the ceremony, Mr. Wilmot, Junius Silverthorn, Carmelyte, two bridesmaids, Edward Dunbar, my groomsman, and myself, were assembled in the drawing-room of Mr. Silverthorn's handsome mansion in Brook Street.

The ceremony was about to commence, when the door-bell rang loudly. I know not why it was, but a presentiment of evil instantly seized upon me. The guilty are ever cowardly. That bell sounded in my ears like a death-knell.

The servant admitted some one. We heard a hearty voice inquiring for Mr. Silverthorn. The drawing-room door was opened and a stranger ushered in—a tall, distinguished-looking man, with a bronzed face and a full beard, dressed in an outlandish fashion, half-nautical, like one who had just come across the sea.

"Just in time for a wedding!" he cried, in loud, ringing tones; "all right, don't mind me."

"You have the advantage of me," said Mr. Silverthorn; "might I ask your name?"

The stranger laughed boisterously.

"The advantage of you!" he cried, and his mirth quite overpowered him. "Well, that is something to brag of; it is not often that anybody gets the advantage of Mr. Junius Silverthorn."

And he laughed more loudly than before.

"So you don't know me?" he continued; "well, that's strange, considering that I am your nephew—Silas Silverthorn."

"Silas Silverthorn!"

Everybody in the room had echoed the name. Had a bombshell suddenly burst amongst us there could not have been more astonishment and amazement. Every eye was turned from the stranger upon me, and I—I prayed for a sudden earthquake that might overwhelm me and my shame together.

"I thought you dead," gasped Junius Silverthorn, thoroughly amazed and unnerved.

"False report, uncle, as you see. I bring you ocular proof to the contrary."

Mr. Wilmot advanced and took Carmelyte from my arm. His face was very grave.

"There is some strange mystery here," he said, turning to Junius Silverthorn, "if this is your nephew—who, pray, is this?"

By the second "this" he designated me. For a moment a wild scheme flashed through my brain. What if I braved the true owner out of his name before them all? In my despair at the thought of losing Carmelyte I was capable of almost any madness. I glanced at Silas Silverthorn, and then turned my eyes towards the mirror, which reflected my own figure. Where was the strange resemblance of which Mr. Silverthorn had spoken. It did not exist. He was an inch taller than myself, and stouter in proportion. True, our hair and eyes were of the same colour; there was a similarity in the general cast of our features—apart, one might be taken for the other—together, there was no striking resemblance. How then could I have passed for him amongst the asso-

clates of his boyhood? Very readily. Silas Silverthorn had left home a raw youth: I was presented as that youth grown to manhood. I had been complimented upon my improved looks. I remembered everybody that remembered me, and everything that they wished me to remember; besides, I had been well tutored by Junius Silverthorn.

I was about to say, before proceeding in this long digression, that the mad thought of maintaining my position had flashed through my brain, but its folly was too apparent and I refrained. The affair was ended with me. I only waited for a decent pretext to leave the room.

Mr. Wilmot, finding his question unanswered, repeated it in a different shape.

"Mr. Silverthorn," he said, somewhat sharply, "will you be kind enough to tell me which of these two gentlemen is your nephew?"

"This," answered Silverthorn, pointing to Silas. "And this: who was about to marry my daughter under a name which, it appears, does not belong to him, who is he?"

"My nephew, also."

Good Heavens! what was he about to do? was there still hope for me?

"Your nephew?"

"By adoption: I love him like a son," the hypocrite put his handkerchief to his eyes, as he spoke. I knew the cause of his grief—he was weeping for the loss of his five thousand pounds.

"I dare say you do love him like a son," sneered Mr. Wilmot; "and perhaps he is one. I have heard of such adoption before. Mr. Silverthorn, your conduct, to say the least, is strange; you appear to have been endeavouring to unite an impostor to my family by marriage. It looks like a design upon my daughter's fortune."

"Mr. Wilmot," replied Silverthorn, meekly, and with a show of injured innocence; "the impostor, as you term him, is a very innocent one, which a few words will explain. This young gentleman's right name is Edgar Ravelin, the son of an old and esteemed friend; I met him lately, returned from a long residence abroad; struck by his extraordinary likeness to Silas, whom I had every reason to believe dead, the strange fancy seized me of adopting him as my nephew and calling him by the same beloved name."

"Silas—I mean, sir," stammered Carmelyte; "is your name really Edgar Ravelin?"

"It is," I answered, briefly.

"And you have deceived me?"

"I have."

"The truth was on your lips yesterday—I understand all now—why did you not speak it?"

"I dared not."

She turned away with a sigh.

"Come, my child," said Mr. Wilmot, "let us go home. This is a terrible scandal, but I think we can live through it."

"Stay!" exclaimed Mr. Silverthorn, "why not let the marriage proceed—why not one nephew as well as another?"

"Ay, why not?" chimed in Silas; "he is enough like me to be my brother, and I'll call him brother with all my heart."

"It cannot be," answered Mr. Wilmot, sternly; "my daughter came here to marry Silas Silverthorn, and never, with my consent, shall she wed an unknown man, who has been introduced to her under such suspicious circumstances."

I could endure it no longer.

"Forgive me and forget me, Carmelyte!" I exclaimed, and hurried from that apartment which had witnessed the destruction of all my hopes. I ascended to my room, and, casting off my wedding-suit, proceeded to dress for a journey.

I afterwards learned what transpired after my exit. It is the strangest part of my story.

"Tarry yet," said Silas, as the guests began to make preparations to depart. "You came here to witness a marriage and you shall not be disappointed, if I can help it. Mr. Wilmot, your daughter came here to marry Silas Silverthorn, and here stand I, Silas Silverthorn, ready to perform my part of the contract—all parties being willing."

"The best thing in the world to get us out of this frightful dilemma," cried Mr. Wilmot, rubbing his hands. "In fact, you are the party, and I am sure Carmelyte can have no objections."

But Carmelyte appeared to have strong and decided objections, as what young lady would not, to be transferred in this unceremonious manner?

"Let me speak a few moments in private with the young lady," said Silas, "I think I can remove her objections."

He led her into a corner of the apartment, and, at the expiration of ten minutes, he came forth to the company, convinced of the deep affection Carmelyte entertained for Edgar, who had been led into this imposition upon her credulity and affections. To Edgar, and to Edgar alone would she be married, adventurer

as he was. Consequently, with the very reluctant consent of Mr. Wilmot, the marriage was there and then solemnized; and, like all matrimonial alliances, effected only by love, Carmelyte and Edgar enjoyed as large a share of domestic felicity as usually falls to the lot of us all, in the conduct of human affairs.

G. L. K.

TO MY WIFE.

BELOVED one, there is a light
Within thy soft blue eyes,
Like gems of starlight in the midst
Of midnight's mystic skies;
And when within their depths I gaze,
My vision soars from earth
To Paradise, where such as thou
Hast an angelic birth.

Oh, beautiful as fairy sprite,
Thou need'st no aid from art,
And all the virtues find a home
Within thy gentle heart:
And holy thoughts are hiding in
Thy spirit's secret cells
As humming-birds in summer hide
Among the lily-bells.

I oft have told thee fairy tales
At twilight's dreary time,
And often with a frightened look
You'd place your hand in mine;
And though since then such childish fears
Have faded from your view,
Yet midst the changing scenes of life,
I have ever found thee true.

To leave thee, love, would be my death,
And oft at night I pray
That God upon one angel's wings
Would take us both away;
That the pure, sweet, undying love,
Which He to us hath given,
If stricken here may bloom again
Within the courts of heaven.

F. J.

SIBYL'S CLIFF.

CHAPTER XX.

ARTHUR'S NARRATIVE.

IN arranging the domestic scenes of human life, the tactics of a discretionary and reasonably intelligent woman, stand unrivalled. No matter whether they be simple or complex, agreeable or disagreeable, joyful or sorrowful, she seems to make the wheels of the internal economy of a household glide smoothly along the corridors and over the carpets, whether they will or not. This, however, does not at all times seem to us to arise solely from the judicious method she has of ordering things, but sometimes from the opportune intervention of dame Fortune, who, in the most appropriate manner imaginable, would seem to come to her aid just at the very moment when she feels all but overcome by the difficulties of her situation. Thus was the good Mrs. Bell assisted, when she knew not how she was to break the arrival of Mr. Arthur to his father, far less to his wife, the quondam Miss Lovelace, when they were both so depressed with sorrow, and so distracted with the various emotions of doubt, anxiety, hope and fear.

Whilst we, however, are thus dilating on the mental qualities of the female mind, Arthur and Adriana are fast recovering from the first shock of their reunion, and the countenances of Sir George and Mrs. Bell are already beaming with joy. Smiles have replaced the tears that had rolled in a miniature deluge from the eyes of Arthur, and the lilies which had, for a short time supplanted the roses in the cheeks of Adriana had again in their turn been displaced, although none of the party had recovered the usual tone of their feelings from the suddenness with which the various events we have just recorded, had succeeded each other. The drama, however, had not yet been played out. Indeed, hardly anything had been said beyond what we have narrated. No explanations had been made, no revelations had taken place, and the name of Rashleigh had not yet escaped from the lips of one of them. However, as the flutter of their feelings had now somewhat subsided, it was natural that Arthur should be immediately interrogated as to where he had been for the past five years?

"That is a natural question," said he in reply to Sir George, "and will require some little time to answer."

"No doubt; but have you been in this country, or have you been engaged in some foreign expedition and been unable to communicate with us?" inquired his interested wife.

"I have indeed been unable to communicate with home, my dear, but it was from the effects of the mis-

fortune which befell me on the evening, when I left my father to return to you."

"What misfortune?" they all eagerly asked.

"Did you not hear of any accident having befallen me on the evening that I left this very house, now more than five years ago, and with the intent of returning on the following day?" inquired Arthur.

They all concurred in stating that they had heard of nothing. They said that they remembered of that evening being followed by a very severe tempest, during which there must have been several shipwrecks, from there having been one or two men found upon the beach, and evidently cast ashore. But they never heard a syllable in reference to what had become of him.

"Well," said he, "I shall tell you what happened to me."

Here he narrated with great force and vividness, the struggle which had taken place between himself and an assassin—without mentioning the name of Rashleigh—at Sibyl's Cliff when he was violently precipitated from the rocks to the beach.

"From this moment," he continued, "I remember nothing. All my future history, from this point, and during the subsequent five years of my life, up to a few weeks ago, is irrecoverably lost to me. What I do know is only from report."

"How is that?" asked Mrs. Bell, who was not less curious than the others to be made acquainted with the singularities of this mysterious affair.

"Why, Mrs. Bell," continued Arthur, "when I was thrown from the cliff, I had received a violent concussion of the brain, and one portion of the skull had been so injured as to have the effect of making me lose my memory almost entirely, whilst, at the same time, it so completely paralyzed the rest of my faculties as to leave me, when I recovered, in a state of almost helpless idiocy."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Sir George; "it is a miracle that you were not dashed to pieces."

"And so it is," coincided Arthur; "for when I think of the dizzy height of that awful cliff, with its many jagged points and jutting ledges, my preservation from instant destruction can be ascribed only to Him whose occasional interference in the affairs of men is designated Providential."

"And how were you saved and rescued from the extreme peril with which you must have been encompassed?" anxiously inquired Adriana.

"Of my own knowledge, I cannot tell; but I dare say my father or you, Mrs. Bell, may remember that there was a gang of gipsies who, at stated intervals, used to visit this neighbourhood, and for some time, to encamp by the side of the Bosa-wood, which is not very far from the cliff."

"I remember perfectly," said Sir George.

"And so do I," said Mrs. Bell, "and a great pest they are sometimes, even yet, and I am not very sure that there is not a gang of them at the present time, located by the edge of the Bosa-wood."

"Well, be that as it may," continued Arthur, "one of these happened to be an eye-witness of my attempted assassination, and without discovering himself at the time, to my treacherous foe, he took the advantage of a near path which he knew led down to the beach, and hastening there, he found me insensible."

"The hand of Providence was in that!" interposed Mrs. Bell.

"Yes; but the gipsy did not come to my aid on the cliff, which I have thought he might have done, and thereby been the means of preventing the catastrophe, with which I was overwhelmed; neither did he so much as give the smallest alarm, which had he done, might have scared the assassin, and averted the calamity with which I have been afflicted for all these years, and saved my friends the pangs of doubt and uncertainty as to my fate, and my beloved wife the pain of an unaccountable absence and separation."

"True, but all these could not be foreseen; especially by an illiterate gipsy, whose mode of life is not very favourable to the almost regulated views of the social conditions of civilized life," observed Sir George.

"Perhaps not generally; but the man who saved me had not been all his life connected with a gang of gipsies," said Arthur; "he had seen better days, and had received an education which entitled him to move in a very different sphere; but drinking, gambling, and an unsettled, dissipated life, had reduced him to the lowest ebb of fortune, had rendered him an outcast from society, and forced him into association with those tribes whose roving habits had a congeniality with his own."

"What was his name?"

"He was called Hiram, and enjoyed a sort of chiefship amongst those with whose fortunes he seemed to have cast in his own. He it was, then, that saved me from certain death; for, although I was not killed by the fall from the cliff, still, had assistance not come, I must very soon have perished."

"And where did he take you?"

"He, I understand, carried me with considerable difficulty to the gipsy encampment, where I was received and tended with as much kindness and skill as they had it in their power to bestow. Under their care, rough although it might be, I very rapidly recovered, but was never suffered to stray far from the camp or to wander anywhere alone. My own habiliments were taken from me, and a gipsy suit supplied in their stead. Soon after this I was carried to France, and lodged in a low quarter of Paris, but as my memory had been so dreadfully impaired, and as my actions, it seems, were rather those of a silly than a sane person, I was treated with great neglect and often with great cruelty."

"Did the man Hiram live with you?" inquired Sir George.

"Oh, no; he sometimes lived one place and sometimes another. It was only when he was in a state of the extremest poverty that he took up his abode in my neighbourhood. Then he lived at No. 16 and I at No. 17 in the Rue Pierre Lescol, one of the lowest parts of Paris."

"And by what means is it that you have been restored to the possession of your faculties, my dear?" asked Adriana.

"By a mere accident. Having often been all but starved to death with hunger, I used to be sent out to forage for food in the best way I could, and as this was sometimes difficult to do in the city, I would stroll into the country and ask for bread wherever I thought I was likely to get it."

"Poor Arthur!" ejaculated Mrs. Bell, while her benevolent eyes flooded with tears.

"It was dreadful!" said Sir George.

"Most distressing," cried Adriana, wiping her eyes with a cambric handkerchief. "But go on with your story."

"Well, on one of these occasions I happened to fall in with a painter, who was making a sketch of some scene which had taken his fancy. He spoke kindly to me, took me home with him, fed me, and kept me to grind his colours, and assist him in various ways. My employments with him, although humble, were not altogether menial, for they were, in some degree, dignified by his frequently assisting me himself in doing them."

"May God bless him!" cried Sir George.

"So say I father; for his benevolence relieved my wants, whilst his goodness of heart induced him to commiserate my condition, and protect me from injury and insult."

"Yes; but how is it you became so passive under so many calamities? Formerly you were capable and always ready to resent injury or insult if any one had dared to offer it you," asked Adriana.

"So I was, my dear, but your husband had not then been thrown over Sibyl's Cliff, nor had he had his brain so injured as to render him an incapable."

"True! But how were you restored?"

"By one of those fortuitous circumstances by which all our destinies are more or less marked. Whilst one day engaged in the painting-room of my benefactor, a certain doctor called who was an enthusiastic disciple of Gall and Spurzheim. He was struck with my personal appearance, and seemed to be possessed of an idea that I had not always been the imbecile which I then was. He accordingly insisted upon the painter allowing him to examine my head, which he did, and as his science enabled him to discover the unnatural form of a portion of my cranium, he determined to have an experiment made upon me. This was accordingly done, and although the good painter was at first afraid to consent to such a course, yet he was induced at last to comply. Fortunately he did so, for in a few weeks the injured portion of my organism was cured, and all my faculties restored."

When this was accomplished, I soon found out Hiram: My memory rushed back upon me with the utmost vividness; my perceptions became as vigorous as before, and as if I had awoke from a deep but refreshing slumber, I became like a person intoxicated with the very freshness, newness and enjoyment of life. The first person to whom I showed myself was the painter, and the next was Hiram. Both were alike astonished at the revivification of all my dead senses, especially Hiram, who could hardly credit his own faculties, when he felt the reality of mine. I charged him with knowing who I was—with having brought me to France in order to subserve some sinister purpose of his own; with being privy to the attempt made upon my life at Sibyl's Cliff; with all his cruelties, neglect, and shameful treatment. He heard me in silence, and seemed conscience-stricken by the vehemence of my accusations. I threatened to give him up to justice, if he would not immediately restore me to England. He felt my moral energy, and knew his own criminal guiltiness. He bowed his head, and listened to me with silent wonder. His poverty was great then, but he had enough to bring me here. Accordingly he—

A knock—another which made the whole house shake, at this moment interrupted the narrative of Arthur, and made everyone in the apartment hold their breath for some time in silent fear.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAST OF SIR RASHLEIGH BRANDON.

"Who is this?" hurriedly asked Sir George.

"Who can it be?" muttered Mr. Bell, as she opened her own door that she might catch the sounds of the voice when the servant had answered the thundering summons.

"Is Sir Rashleigh Brandon at home?" inquired a loud, firm, but not unmusical voice.

"Yes, sir."

"Can I see him?"

"One moment, if you please," and the servant held the outer door in her hand as she saw Mrs. Bell approaching.

"Sir Rashleigh?" she said, "walk in!" and she showed this unknown visitor into the same room into which Arthur had at first been ushered.

The visitor presented Mrs. Bell with his card, with which she retired to send up-stairs to Sir Rashleigh, who, on inquiry, she found to be in what was emphatically called, "his own room," and which was, as rarely as possible, entered by anyone but himself.

Before she suffered the card, however, to pass from her hands, Mrs. Bell carefully read it, and pondering the unusual name it bore all the way along the lobby, finally entered her own parlour, and putting it into the hands of Sir George, asked if he knew the person.

"Indeed, I do not," said Sir George, and handing it to Arthur, put the same question to him.

"Yes," said Arthur, "I know both the name and the man, and let the card be sent to Rashleigh at once."

It was forthwith sent accordingly; but it was evident that the mind of Arthur was filled with some painful anxiety, as he sat for a few moments in silence.

Meanwhile the visitor had been shown into the presence of Sir Rashleigh, who bit his nether lip with ill-suppressed rage and disgust, as he coldly shook the hand of his friend, the Chevalier St. George.

"Well, what has brought you back to England again?" was the first question put by Rashleigh to his visitor, whom the reader will recognize as Hiram, the gipsy, *alias* Konrad the low tavern-haunter, *alias* Le Corbeau, or the Crow, and *alias* the Chevalier St. George, under which he had now become a visitor at Oakland Manor.

The reply which this resolute victim of low passions gave to the question of Rashleigh, was so remarkable for its brevity and force that it might have excited the envy of an ancient Spartan.

"Want!"

"Want!" reiterated Sir Rashleigh, "that surely cannot be, when I myself so frequently and so largely have supplied you with sums even greater than my means have allowed me to apply to my own purposes."

"Want, Sir Rashleigh Brandon, I repeat, has brought me back to England, and I shall take care that want, Sir Rashleigh Brandon, shall not again drive me from it," repeated the chevalier, with an expression sufficiently stern to indicate a purpose so settled, that Rashleigh in a moment felt it would be extremely difficult to shake.

"But why come to me?" asked Rashleigh. "I have surely well paid you for the silence you have kept."

"And I have as well kept the silence as you have well paid for it, Sir Rashleigh; and if you do not supply my present necessities without further demur or delay, my silence will be broken in such a manner as will make you rue the day that ever you heard the name of Sibyl's Cliff."

"Hush, hush!" cried Rashleigh, "recall not the scene which the mention of that horrid name invariably conjures up to my distempered vision. I thought that the memory of that place had been obliterated even from your recollection."

"Obliterated or what you call it from my recollection—ha! ha! ha! No, no, Rashleigh, it's the memory of Sibyl's Cliff that has, up to this hour, for these many years, supplied my pocket, ministered to my wants, fostered my propensities—"

"And fed your brutal appetites," wound up Rashleigh, with a look of the most withering scorn and detestation.

"Say not so, Sir Rashleigh!" roared the chevalier; "be my appetites what they may, my hands have never yet been stained with the blood of a brother!"

Black as the darkest thunder-cloud that ever covered the face of a stormy sky was the scowl of Rashleigh as he bent his fiery eyes upon the gipsy who, unfortunately for him, as he conceived, had been an eye-witness of his struggle with the heir of Oakland when precipitating him over the cliff; but he

maintained his self-possession, and with a show of calm deliberation, entered a small cabinet which led from the apartment in which they had been conversing. The chevalier heard him turn the lock of a drawer, and fancied that he had gone for the money of which he stood in such peremptory need. In this, however, he was mistaken. The mind of Rashleigh had entered upon a new phase, and he thought that he might even rid himself of this pest without much danger to his own neck by the act. Accordingly, he returned from the cabinet with the same assumed calm and deliberate air with which he had left it.

"How much money do you require to satisfy your present necessities?" asked Rashleigh.

"As much as you can give. I have written you five times for money and you have not deigned to answer one of my letters," said the chevalier.

"And you have come in *propria persona*, that I may answer you in the same manner."

"Yes."

"Well, then, my answer is that I have no money for myself."

"Sir Rashleigh!" exclaimed the chevalier.

"Well?"

"Have a care how you provoke a desperate man."

"I have no wish to provoke you."

"Give me money!"

"No!"

"Money!"

"I have none!"

"Money or—"

"Your life! not mine!" cried Rashleigh, at the same instant pulling a pistol from his breast coat-pocket and discharging it close to the region of the heart of the gipsy. This act discovered what it was for which he had entered his cabinet.

The chevalier staggered against the wall; then reeled forward a little way and fell.

The report of the pistol alarmed the whole of the household. Footsteps were heard hurrying up the stairs which led to Rashleigh's room, and the first that made her appearance in his presence was Mrs. Bell.

"What's the matter?" she asked, in the utmost consternation.

"I know not," said Sir Rashleigh; "this man, whom I have known before, has now shot himself in my presence."

"Is false, false as h—?" exclaimed the dying man. "Sir Rashleigh, the murderer of his own cousin, the heir of Oakland Manor, has also murdered me. My death, however, shall be avenged."

At this moment Sir George came upon the scene, followed by an eager troop of servants, one and all of whom were making towards the chevalier, who, however, by a wave of his hand, motioned them back. Then fixing his fast-glazing eyes upon Sir George, and pointing to Rashleigh, he said:

"That is the concealed murderer of your son. He was the destroyer of the happiness of your son's wife and child, and he, ruthless monster that he is, would have been the destroyer of you all—Life is fast ebbing, Sir George. I feel the hand of death upon me, and I am not sorry. But, oh! have justice satisfied upon that villain; let him have the reward of his crimes duly meted out to him, and let his name be branded with ignominy for ever, Sir George," and the fast sinking chevalier beckoned him to bend his ear towards his mouth, when he said, with an apparently joyful burst of dying gratification, "your son lives! The heir of Oakland Manor lives!"

"Lives!" sneeringly repeated Rashleigh, whilst a sardonic grin still more than usually disfigured the expression of his lips.

"Yes—lives!" cried the chevalier.

"Where?" asked Sir Rashleigh, contemptuously.

"There!" cried the chevalier, whose spirit fled with the effort, as he pointed to Arthur and Adriana, then entering the room.

Sir Rashleigh was struck with horror. The unexpected apparition of Arthur seemed for a moment to turn him into stone, and to petrify every faculty of his soul. For an instant, he appeared for once to waver in his resolution; but recovering all his wonted energy of wickedness, he drew from his breast coat-pocket another pistol, and presenting it at the head of Arthur, fired; then dashing the weapon at Sir George, fled from the house with his utmost speed.

These daring acts followed each other with such rapidity, that everyone was taken by surprise, and totally unable to secure or even pursue him. For the present, however, he was beyond the reach of the inmates of Oakland Manor.

Happily, neither Sir George nor Arthur were hurt by the malicious attempts of Rashleigh to destroy them both. The ball had very slightly grazed the right ear of Arthur, and was found lodged several inches in the wall. The pistol entirely missed Sir George, but left a deep indentation in a piece of oak panelling, which bore testimony to the misdirected strength of Rashleigh's hatred for many a day afterwards.

Arthur now requested Sir George and Adriana to retire, whilst he and the others turned their attention to the body of the dead man. It was carried to another room, in a remote corner of the house, until all the legal authorities were satisfied as to the cause of death. It was then taken from the manor, and decently interred, at the expense of Sir George.

On the evening of the very day that the obsequies of the cavalier had been performed, a messenger arrived at Oakland Manor, desiring to see Mr. Arthur. When he was admitted, he disembosomed himself of an important discovery.

"I have found the body of Sir Rashleigh," said he. "Where?"

"At the bottom of Sibyl's Cliff, with his skull broken in, and his body dreadfully mutilated."

When the intelligence was carried to Sir George, he clasped his hands together, and turning his eyes solemnly towards Heaven, he said, "Thy vengeance, O God of justice, has pursued him. The cliff over which he had meditated the death of my son, has proved the scene of his own destruction."

Such was the end of Sir Rashleigh Brandon, whose name was never more mentioned within the walls of Oakland Manor.

Our story may now be said to be finished, notwithstanding there are several obscure transactions which the knowledge of Arthur enables us to lay clearly before the mind of the reader.

When Rashleigh, as Arthur has already said, had been witnessed by Hiram force Arthur over Sibyl's Cliff, he flew down a narrow, precipitous path which led to the shore, and which enabled him to reach the spot where Arthur must necessarily fall, in a comparatively short space of time. Here he found him, and seeing that he was not dead, he carried him on his back to the side of the Boss-wood where he and his gipsy companions had encamped.

All the circumstances were favourable to the gipsies, whose acute and worldly character of mind saw at once the use which could be made of them in subjecting Rashleigh to their power, and extorting money from him. As Hiram had been the witness of the crime, he was the first to make it his business to meet Sir Rashleigh, as it were, by accident, and accuse him of what he had done. This was accordingly effected, and the sum of five hundred pounds was instantly handed to him.

This sum was kept secret from the rest of the gipsies, Hiram having determined to apply it to his own purposes; but resolving still to preserve control over Rashleigh, he went to Paris, and carried Arthur along with him. To accomplish these objects was by no means difficult to Hiram, as his nomadic comrades did not see the profit in being troubled or encumbered with the care of a half-idiot man during their peregrinations over a large portion of the country.

Once in Paris, Hiram took lodgings for him, at No. 17, in the Rue Pierre Leecot, which number he laboured to impress upon his mind with such perseverance, that he at last accomplished it. His object in this was to fix the house where he lived, in the memory of Arthur, so firmly, that if he lost himself, he should be able to say where he resided. This accounts for his so readily answering to that strange cognomen, when applied to him by the artist Bruno.

With the leading features in the rest of Arthur's adventures, the reader is already acquainted.

The severe storm which almost immediately succeeded the supposed murder of Arthur had washed a drowned man ashore, and it was upon the body of this unfortunate person that the inquest was held. It was also supposed to be his corpse that Rashleigh followed to the grave, from the presumption that it was that of Arthur.

There was no body, however, in the coffin on that occasion—the wreckers of this wild part of the Essex coast having stripped that of everything to the very shroud-sheet, and made away with it elsewhere. A few stones supplied its place in the melancholy procession.

Gradually these events were suffered to pass into obivance in the minds of the inhabitants of Oakland Manor. Each and all of them had reason to be thankful for their preservation through so many scenes of trial, and it only wanted young Arthur now to complete the happiness of the mansion. He was accordingly brought home from the boarding-school, and in due course, was sent to Eton to finish a classical education, with a view to his entering the church. Young Mrs. Franklin, *alias* Adriana Lovelace, no more returned to the stage, but with joy abandoned a profession which, however fascinating to the mind of one that is eminently successful, is, of all pursuits, the least calculated to impart an enduring satisfaction to the closing scenes of, at longest, a transitory earthly career.

THE END.

INVENTIONS, THE ROAD TO RICHES.—What would the world be without the thousand-and-one ingenious

little utensils, tools, instruments, and appliances scattered on every hand? It would compare with a workshop without tools, a hand without fingers, a waggon without wheels; it would, in short, be as helpless as a rudderless ship without sails. In the field of invention there are many avenues and bye-paths as yet unexplored and unworked. Men dig in the bowels of the earth for gold and for diamonds, but there are mines of wealth lying upon the surface; it only requires a keen vision, practical ideas, and a little study to discover them. Men do find them every day. Let those who seek a speedy road to riches turn their attention to the useful arts, and to supplying the wants existing in them for improved machinery. In this way they will not only do themselves a service, but the world also.

TO-MORROW.

DID we but know what lies beyond

This varied, shadowy path we tread,

How often would our souls despond,

Our eyes the tears of sorrow shed!

But God, who knows what's best to do,

Who sees us from his starry throne,

Has wisely hidden from our view

That which had best remain unknown.

Youth dreams of many beaming things,

As on he lies in pleasure's track;

Each day some new-born promise brings

He turns no eye of sorrow back.

The flowery fields are all before,

His eyes on some bright star are set,

Life is to him a sunny shore.

He'll learn it has its shadows yet.

To-morrow! in thy secret shade

I little know what is for me;

I may be with my father laid,

Or wracked on wild misfortune's sea!

But far beyond life's boundary lives

The everlasting army bright;

And He alone who takes or gives,

Can guide my wandering steps aright.

J. K. H.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jewell," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER LVII.

GUIDED BY BARNES, the three females quitted the house by the garden, at the back, and crossed into that of their neighbour just as the guests—and they were numerous—were taking their leave.

"I must quit you here," said the old man; "my being seen by any of Quirk's spies might lead to detection."

"Oh, pray don't leave us!" eagerly exclaimed the abigail, whose courage was evidently quitting her; "should we be detected, stopped, and—"

"Silence!" said her mistress, sternly. "Is this your fidelity?"

Drawing her veil closely over her features, as if to guard against the night air, Lady Briancourt passed rapidly through the house of her neighbour, closely followed by her waiting-maid and Jane, who was in the rear.

The carriage which was to convey them to their destination was one of the farthest from the house; they had to cross the length of the front lawn to reach it.

In the bustle of the servants bringing up the vehicles poor Jane became separated from her companions. She hesitated, became confused, and knew not which way to turn.

A man, whose features were closely muffled, approached, and whispered in her ear:

"This way, young lady—this way!"

"You mistake—I have lost my party—answered the terrified girl, not knowing what to say.

In the same low tone, the fellow pronounced the name of "Lady Briancourt!"

Not doubting for an instant that it was some person in the confidence of Barnes, whom that faithful personage had employed to watch over their safety, Jane followed him without hesitation, till they reached a post-chaise, without the iron gates. The steps were down, she sprang in, and was followed by her conductor, who, closing the door, threw one arm around her, and, before she could give the least alarm, placed a handkerchief to her mouth.

The chaise started at a brisk pace. When her cap removed the handkerchief, he found that Jane had fainted.

"This is more than I bargained for!" he muttered, with an air of concern; "after all, it is better as it is. I have secured her, and I should like to see the man who would attempt to part us!"

The morning after the marriage, the following announcement appeared in most of the daily papers:

"Married by special license, at the house of her grandmother, Lady Briancourt, Marian Stanley to Charles Harland, Esq., only son and heir of the Rev. Robert Harland, rector of Fulton, Northumberland."

Deep and bitter was the curse of mingled rage and disappointment which escaped the lips of Sir Phineas, as he read the paragraph, whilst seated at breakfast in his chambers in the Albany. At first he could scarcely believe that it was true.

"The Jezabel!" he muttered, between his clenched teeth: "if she has really braved me—if Broadlands has slipped through my fingers, I'll hang her as high as Haman!"

With this pious resolution, he started on the instant for Brompton.

Doctor Harland was seated in the library when the baronet, his countenance livid with passion, drove up to the house.

Without waiting to be announced, he pushed past the astonished servant, and unceremoniously entered the room.

The rector, who expected his visit, was fully prepared to receive him.

"Did not my previous knowledge of you, Sir Phineas," he said, in a tone of freezing coldness, "enable me to recognize you, your manners would sufficiently announce you!"

"Where is Lady Briancourt?" demanded the young man.

"Gone!" was the reply.

"Gone!" repeated the baronet; "impossible! Gone! Where?"

"Had her ladyship intended you to be made acquainted with the place of her destination, she would doubtless have informed you!"

Sir Phineas was thunderstruck. This was anything but the style of reception he anticipated. He had expected to encounter tears and supplications; he was met by disappointment and defiance.

"No matter!" he said; "let her fly where she will, I shall follow her! I'll hunt her through the world! Answer me, sir—is the announcement I this morning read in the paper, of your son's marriage with my cousin, true?"

"Perfectly so," replied the rector; "I myself performed the ceremony!"

For some moments his visitor was unable to speak; so bitter was the pang of disappointed avarice and hate.

"My son and his bride started last night for Broadlands," continued the speaker.

"Broadlands!" repeated the baronet, with an insolent laugh; "that has been the bait! But you have been guiled by the manoeuvring old poisoner! Your son's wife shall never inherit an acre of it!"

The rector looked surprised.

In his disinterested desire to promote the happiness of his son, he had never once speculated upon the subject.

"She is illegitimate!" added the speaker with a sneer; "a wench with a sickly face and damru eyes for her only fortune! And as for Lady Briancourt," he added, bitterly, "she shall repeat the trick she has played me."

"Respecting the legitimacy of my daughter-in-law, Sir Phineas," said Dr. Harland, with great dignity, "it is not from your lips that I shall credit such an aspersion. But even were it as you assert, it would neither lessen her in my esteem nor love."

"You are vastly generous!"

"Say rather just," answered the old gentleman, with a sigh; "I have seen quite enough of the world to know the means by which confiding innocence is too often betrayed; nor can I understand the justice of the world, which visits the crime of the seducer, upon the head of his innocent child. You have inexpressibly shocked me," he added; "neither my years nor character render the tone in which our interview has been conducted becoming. You will oblige me by quitting the house."

With an air of defiance his visitor threw himself upon one of the sofas, deliberately stretched out his legs, and looked the speaker fully in the face.

Dr. Harland rang the bell.

"By what right," said the young man, "do you presume to order here?"

Upon this point he was speedily satisfied—for the rector produced and read a written authority from Lady Briancourt to take possession of the mansion, and act as her representative till her return.

"Return!" repeated the baronet, bitterly. "If you do not rot in your grave till then, I would not give much for the next presentation to Fulton!"

The servant now entered the room.

"You will show Sir Phineas the door!" said his master.

His visitor darted a look of defiance, and refused to stir.

"Send for an officer!" continued the rector; "there is a limit to my patience, Sir Phineas, although it would appear there is none to your insolence!" The domestic disappeared upon his errand.

"Let the officer come," exclaimed the ruffian; "I shall charge you with aiding the escape of a murderer!"

Dr. Harland smiled contemptuously.

"It is felony by the law," he added.

"You forget, young man," replied the clergyman, "that the murderer, as you style her, is your own grandmother."

"I'll hang her!" exclaimed Sir Phineas, in a tone of bitterness; "I'll hang her!"

"And have you no pity?"

"None!"

"No remorse?"

"Remorse! She has robbed me of Broadlands!"

"Shame, Sir Phineas—shame!" exclaimed the rector, who began to doubt whether Lady Briancourt might not have deceived him in the tale she had told him to account for the suspicion of her grandson and the lawyer.

"I will not urge to you the infamy which such an act would entail upon your name—for your name cannot be disgraced; but I would, if possible, awaken you to your own personal interest!"

His visitor began to listen.

"Broadlands, it seems, is the aim for the possession of which you would bring this fearful accusation against the nearest relative you have on earth! Might it not be obtained in a surer way?"

"I do not understand you, sir."

"By deed of gift, perhaps?"

With a prudence worthy of his tutor, Quirk, the young man hesitated. He began to suspect that the speaker was empowered to make some such arrangement.

"If you are authorized," he said.

"I am authorised to do nothing, Sir Phineas, but keep possession of this house, from which I must once more request you to retire! Remember," he added, "that in the event of Lady Briancourt's conviction, one stroke of her pen, an hour, a minute before that conviction takes place, may convey the property for which you are ready to sacrifice honour, self-respect, the world's opinion, to another, even should my daughter-in-law, as you assert, prove illegitimate!"

This consideration was not without its weight; and the baronet at last consented to quit the mansion without making the exposure he threatened. As he passed the door, he encountered the domestic with the officer.

"Better Broadlands than nothing!" he muttered; "and yet without the girl, my revenge would be but half-complete!"

CHAPTER LVIII

Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison has residence and murderous power;
For this being smelt, with that sense cheers each part—
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
And where the wonder is predominant,
Full soon the canker, death, eats up the plant.
Shakespeare.

At an early hour on the morning following the examination of the mortal remains of the husband of Lady Briancourt, the gentlemen who had presided at the disinterment assembled in the laboratory of Dr. Bunn.

Quirk, with the instinct of the raven, was present, as well as the two county magistrates and the coroner, who had issued their warrant for the proceedings.

The leathern bags, with the seals unbroken, were placed upon a table in the centre of the room.

There was an expression of seriousness upon the countenances of every one present—particularly the magistrates, who were perfectly aware of the terms on which the deceased baronet had lived with his unhappy wife.

Just as they were about to commence an analysis of the portions of the stomach and intestines, the assistant of Dr. Bunn entered with a card, which he gave to his employer, who, apologizing for his momentary absence, left the room.

"Surely he would never quit us to attend a patient at such a time?" observed the lawyer.

"It is not a patient!" replied the assistant.

"A visitor then?" added Quirk, impatiently.

"Nor a visitor," continued the young man, with a smile; for he had ascertained the business of the party before he ventured to disturb his principal at such a moment.

Further discussion was ended by the return of Dr. Bunn, followed by a tall, thin, gentlemanly-looking personage, between fifty and sixty years of age, who carried a note-book in his hand.

"Sir Frederick Silvertop!" exclaimed Sir Henry and the lawyer.

The latter secretly wondered what could bring him there.

Sir Frederick was one of the most eminent members of the bar. Remarkable alike for his eloquence and profound knowledge of the law, his mind, cast in the same mould which had produced a Bacon and a Locke, grasped the most abstruse points with a logical and analytical precision. As an orator he was remarkable for the elegance of his language. His periods were rounded and polished with as much labour as a verse of Pope or Campbell, although the pains bestowed upon them was not quite so apparent—since the most fastidious critic would have been puzzled to substitute a word in any of his phrases which would not have impaired their force or elegance.

A member of the legislature, he had already twice filled one of the highest legal offices in the gift of the crown.

"Bless me!" said the baronet, shaking him by the hand—for they both belonged to the same party in the Commons—"what brings you to—sex?"

"I am here," said the accomplished barrister, "to watch your proceedings!"

There was a look of general surprise.

"On the part of Lady Briancourt," he added; "who ought, I think, in courtesy, to have been made acquainted with them!"

"The fact is," observed one of the magistrates, "that at present we are scarcely aware of their aim ourselves! Mr. Quirk made oath, before myself and Sir Henry, that he had every reason to suspect the grandfather of the present Sir Charles Briancourt had been poisoned; and we issued our warrant for exhuming his remains accordingly."

"On the information of Mr. Quirk!" repeated Sir Frederick, in a tone of exquisite politeness. "I have heard something of that gentleman from my client! I shall be delighted to make his acquaintance!"

Sir Henry—who thought his learned friend wasted a great deal of unnecessary courtesy upon a mere lawyer—a race which he held in utter contempt—introduced the gentleman.

Although a word had not been uttered to alarm him, Mr. Quirk did not feel altogether at his ease. Long experience in the courts had taught him that the distinguished advocate who had so unexpectedly made his appearance was never so polished as when he meditated one of those fine and fatal attacks which carried confusion and defeat to the cause of his opponents.

"Has the exhumation of the body taken place?" inquired Sir Frederick.

Dr. Bunn pointed to the bags containing the portions of the stomach and intestines on the table.

"And the analysis?" added the speaker.

"Not yet."

"And may I inquire," continued the legal adviser of Lady Briancourt, "whether Mr. Quirk—whose research in this affair, and disinterested zeal cannot be too greatly praised—has given any clue as to the means employed to cause the death of the baronet?"

The question was answered in the negative.

"I mean," continued Sir Frederick, "has he specified the poison, mineral or vegetable, by which death has been occasioned?"

"No!"

"In that case, Dr. Bunn," he said with a coolness which startled all present, and no one more so than Mr. Quirk, "you had better test for arsenic. Although so many years have elapsed since the event took place, you will detect its presence more readily than any other poison. Of course," he added, "you have Marsh's apparatus?"

The doctor answered in the affirmative.

The seals of the bags were broken, and a portion of the contents boiled in distilled water. Whilst the medical men were engaged in their operations, Sir Frederick busied himself with the morning papers, or in conversation with the baronet, appearing as much unconcerned as though the result could in no way affect the interests of his client.

Nearly two hours passed in an animated discussion between the gentlemen. One of the magistrates made an observation on the extraordinary disappearance of Lady Briancourt; it was most probably intended as a feeler. The learned gentleman only smiled.

"You must admit," said the speaker, "that it has a strange, not to say unfavourable appearance?"

"Without explanation, it certainly does!" replied Sir Frederick Silvertop. "Although I am not fond of making admissions, I think I may concede that point!"

A strong odour of garlic filled the room in which the party were assembled. Several large spots, which had been deposited upon a china plate, had been exposed to the nasal test, and the presence of the metallic poison was clearly demonstrated.

"Whew!" exclaimed Sir Henry, who had not the slightest idea of the cause of the odour in the room; "what an unpleasant smell!"

"It is the arsenic!" coolly replied the legal adviser of Lady Briancourt.

Dr. Bunn and his assistants announced that their experiments were complete, and that they had detected arsenic in considerable quantities in the parts of the body subject to their analysis.

Quirk scarcely knew whether to enjoy his triumph or to regret it: the presence of the barrister embarrassed him.

"Of course, gentlemen," observed Sir Frederick, "you are perfectly satisfied as to the result of your experiments?"

On this point they assured him there could be no mistake; the poison had been found in quantities unusually large.

"In that case," continued the advocate—who, to the great mortification of the lawyer, appeared to have taken the entire direction of the affair out of his hands—"we will, with your permission, adjourn to another apartment. I believe, doctor," he added, "that you are in the commission of the peace?"

"I am, Sir Frederick," replied the party thus addressed, "and my library is very much at your service!"

As soon as the magistrates were seated in the library, the deposition of Mr. Quirk was read, in which that gentleman stated on oath that he had reasons to believe that the late Sir Charles Briancourt, the grandfather of the present possessor of the title, had been poisoned.

It was upon this deposition that the magistrates had issued their warrant for exhuming the body, and the examination we have just described had taken place.

The evidence of the medical men was next taken, and the presence of arsenic in the stomach and intestines distinctly proved.

"I must now call upon Mr. Quirk," said Sir Frederick, addressing the magistrates, "to state the reasons which induced him, after so many years had elapsed, to entertain so extraordinary a suspicion—which suspicion, unhappily, has been confirmed beyond the possibility of a doubt to any reasonable person?"

The lawyer felt dreadfully embarrassed, and knew not what to reply. If he produced the letter, he let the direction of the affair go from his hands—lost the power of compromise with Lady Briancourt, which he was so anxious to retain. He had gone too far, or not far enough.

He faltered out something about not being prepared.

"My dear sir," continued the barrister in a tone of silvery softness, in which a slight strain of irony was mingled, "I need not point out to a man of your experience, knowledge of affairs, and great tact, the false position in which such a declaration places you. You come forward after a lapse of five-and-twenty years—state on oath that you have reasons to suppose that the late Sir Charles Briancourt was murdered—a warrant was issued for the exhuming and examining his remains—the gentlemen, to whom the task has been intrusted, prove, by their evidence, that your suspicions were just—and now you refuse to state the grounds which first led you to entertain them! This is trifling with the intelligence of the magistrates, as well as the ends of justice!"

A murmur of assent broke from all present.

"You are right, Sir Frederick—quite right!" observed Sir Henry; "here has been a gentleman of good family, who kept the best pack of hounds in the county—a sound Protestant and a loyal subject—murdered; and Mr. Quirk refuses to state the grounds on which he was first led to come to that conclusion!"

Although his brother magistrates could not comprehend what the hounds and the Protestantism of the murdered man had to do with the question, they perfectly agreed with the inference which the baronet had drawn upon the subject.

"You compromise yourself!" said Sir Frederick.

Several of the magistrates observed that the affair began to look very suspicious against the lawyer himself.

Thus urged, and finding that he had no means of escaping from the dilemma, Quirk at last produced the letter written by the murdered man a few hours before his death. It was addressed to Lady Briancourt. Its contents made a painful impression on all present.

"I forgive you," it commenced, "even whilst the poison is reeking my heart with the agony it occasions; and I do so from the conviction that I was wrong to urge my suit against your inclination, although I loved you, Clara, truly and devotedly. Heaven is my witness that I would rather a thousand times have suffered any amount of misery, than have inflicted the injury I have done upon you! Forgive me, Clara, since death atones for all! Barnes—whose promise I can rely upon—has promised never to disclose the fatal circumstance which has caused my death, and your future misery!"

A general silence followed the reading of the letter. It was broken by one of the magistrates inquiring whether any one present could identify the handwriting of the late baronet.

"I can," replied Sir Henry; "we were old friends and companions in early life! It is the handwriting of Sir Charles!"

"Not the least doubt of it," replied Sir Frederick Silvertop, with a frankness which appeared very singular in the legal adviser of Lady Briancourt. "Mr. Quirk," he added, turning to the lawyer, "perhaps you will state to the magistrates how you became possessed of that very remarkable document?"

"I—I found it," faltered the lawyer.

"Remember, sir, you are upon your oath."

"I am perfectly aware of it, Sir Frederick."

"You will pardon my reminding you of that serious fact," continued the counsel; "I was fearful you had forgotten it. And where did you find it, may I inquire?"

"In—a—amongst a mass of papers which came into my possession as agent to the late and present baronet."

"I believe Sir Phineas Briancourt is your grandson?" observed Sir Frederick.

"Yes."

"Is he aware of this discovery?"

"Partially."

"And does he sanction these proceedings?"

Quirk felt that he was being tempted upon dangerous ground: for his own reputation he cared but little, although he felt anxious to spare his grandson the odium of appearing in the unenviable light of prosecuting the nearest relative he had in the world.

"Not exactly! Sanction them? Of course not! He—"

"Mr. Quirk, I must beg of you to be more definite in your answers. You say that Sir Phineas Briancourt does not exactly sanction them. How far does the qualification exactly extend?"

The lawyer remained silent.

"The fact is, gentlemen," said Sir Frederick Silvertop, "Sir Phineas does sanction this extraordinary attempt to drag an aged lady before the tribunals of her country; and I defy Mr. Quirk to contradict me when I state that, if Lady Briancourt would have consented to resign Broadlands to her affectionate grandson, these proceedings would never have been heard of."

"He can never have been so imprudent," thought Quirk; "he should have left that part of the negotiation to me."

"He had the modesty," continued the speaker, "to make the proposal to her himself."

Several present looked incredulous.

"And the infamy, he added, "to threaten her with the hangman, in the event of her refusing compliance with his extortion. But this is not the moment to enter on the subject of his conduct or motives."

After a consultation between the magistrates, it was reluctantly decided that a warrant should be issued for the apprehension of Lady Briancourt.

"And where will you find her?" demanded Quirk, who had just received a letter from his grandson; "she has fled."

"Lady Briancourt," said Sir Frederick, coolly, "is at her seat—Broadlands. I breakfasted with her this very morning."

Had a thunderbolt fallen, the lawyer could not have felt more bewildered and surprised.

(To be continued.)

LORD MAYOR'S DAY IN DUBLIN.

The inauguration of the Lord Mayor for the present year took place on Friday, the 8th ult., under somewhat novel circumstances. Mr. M'Swiney, the new chief magistrate, having determined to revive the ancient splendour of the Lord Mayor's show. The procession, besides the usual detachments of military and police, included the City Fire Brigade, two knights in armour, trumpeters in state dresses, men-at-arms in coats of mail, galliglasses in chain mail, armed with the Irish battleaxe and wearing the saffron-coloured mantle of the ancient Celt, a body of javelin men, and the "gold coach" drawn by six greys.

The display was completely successful, and was witnessed with delight by immense crowds of spectators. On arriving at the City Hall, the Lord Mayor addressed the Council in a speech in which he described the pre-eminence of Dublin over other cities which had he said an "unequivocal notoriety" for "grievous crimes, unnatural atrocities, dark revelations, and hideous deformities," with especial reference to the Divorce Court, and the practice of infanticide; and concluded by saying:—

"I cannot but hope that during my year of office I will be enabled to assert that which the ex-Lord Mayor so nobly asserted during his year of office—the claim of Dublin to its proper position by prescriptive right of the second city of the empire, and that

you will all sustain me whenever the citizens and our fellow-countrymen are attacked by an alien press—by those who cannot put pen to paper without maligning the character of our countrymen, and taking advantage of the few exceptions I have alluded to to represent us to Europe as demons, as wretches hardly removed from the lowest state of barbarism, and fit only to be arrayed on one side or the other of the massacres now going on in Virginia and Tennessee."

LATITAT.

"NEVER crosses his i's nor dots his f's, and his n's and v's and r's are all alike!" said, almost despairingly, Mr. Simon Quillpen, the painstaking clerk of old Lawyer Latitat, as he sat, late at night, on the last day of the year, digging away at the copy of a legal document his liberal patron and employer had placed in his hands in the early part of the evening. "Thank Heaven!" he added, laying down his pen, and consulting a huge silver bull's-eye, which he pulled from a threadbare fob, "I shall soon get through this job, and then, hey for roast potatoes and the charming society of Mrs. Q.!" and with this consolatory reflection, he resumed his work with redoubled energy.

Mr. Quillpen was a little man; not so very little as to pass for a phenomenon, but certainly too small to be noticed by a recruiting grenadier sergeant. His nose was quite sharp, and gave his wild, thin countenance, particularly as he carried his head a little on one side, a very birdlike air. He trod, too, gingerly and lightly, very like a sparrow or a tomtit; and, to complete the analogy, his head being almost always surmounted by a pen, he had a sort of crested, blue-jayish aspect, that was rather comical.

Quillpen had a very little wife, and three very little children, Bob, Chiffy and the baby; the last the ultimate specimen of the *diminundo*. It was well for them that they were so small, for Quillpen obtained his "starvelhood" by driving the quill for Mr. Latitat, at eighty pounds a year, to which Mrs. Quillpen added, from time to time, certain little sums derived from making shirts and overalls at the rate of about five pence the million stitches.

Whether Mr. Latitat was able to pay more was a question that never entered the minute brain of Simon Quillpen; for he had so humble an opinion of his own merits, and was always so contented and cheerful, that he regarded his salary as enormous, and was wont playfully to sign little confidential notes, Croesus Quillpen and Girard Quillpen, and on rare convivial occasions would sometimes style himself Baron Rothschild. But this last title was very rarely indulged in, because it once sent his particular crony, a chuckle-headed clerk in the post-office, into a cachinnatory fit which was "rather in the apoplectic line."

"To return to our muttons," Simon dug away at his copying with an occasional reverential glance at a certain low oaken door, opening into the *penetratia* of this abode of law and righteousness, behind which oaken door, at that very moment, sat Mr. Lucius Latitat, either deeply engaged in the solution of some vast legal problem, or calculating the interest on an outstanding note, or consulting with chuckling delight a list of mortgages to be foreclosed.

Well, Quillpen finished his document, wiped his pen on a thick velvet butterfly, laid it on the rack above the ink, pushed back his chair from the table, withdrew the cambric sleeve from his right arm, and smoothed down his wristbands, having first put on his India-rubber overshoes. The fact is, he was very anxious to get home, and he could not go without first seeing Mr. Latitat. The idea of knocking at Mr. Latitat's door on business of his own, never once occurred to him. He would do that for a client, but not for himself. So he ventured on a series of low coughs, and finding no notice was taken of them, he dropped the poker into the coal-hod, the most daring act he had ever perpetrated. The slight noise thus produced crashed on his guilty ears like thunder, or rather with the roar of a universal earthquake. Slight, however, as it was, it brought out Mr. Latitat from his interior.

"What the deuce are you making such a racket for?" he exclaimed, in tones that thrilled to the heart of his *employé*; then, without waiting for an answer, he slightly glanced at the table, and asked, "Have you got through that job?"

"Yes'm—I mean, yes't," replied the quivering Simon.

"Well then you can go. I am going myself. You blow out the lights and lock the room. And mind and be here early to-morrow morning—nothing like beginning the New Year well. Good night!"

"Mr. Latitat, sir!" cried Quillpen, with desperate resolution, as he saw the great man about to disappear—"please, sir—could you let me have a little money to-night?"

"Why, what do you want of money?" retorted the lawyer. "Oh, I s'pose you have a host of unpaid bills."

"No, sir; no, sir—that's not it," Simon hastened to say. "I haint got nary bill standing. I pay as I go. Cash takes the lot!"

"None of your coarse, vulgar slang to me!" said Latitat. "Reserve it for your loose companions. If not to pay bills, what for?"

"Please, sir, we—that is, Mrs. Q. and myself, want to put something in the children's stockings, sir."

"Then put the children's legs in 'em!" said the lawyer, with a grin. "I make no payments to be used for any such ridiculous purposes. Good night. Yet, stay—take this letter—there's money in it—a large amount—put it in the post-office with your own hands as you go home."

"And you can't let me have a trifle?" gasped Simon.

"Not a penny!" snarled the lawyer! and he slammed the door behind him, and went heavily down the stairs.

"I wonder how it feels to punch a man's head," said Simon, as he stood rooted to the spot where Mr. Latitat left him. "It's illegal—it's actionable, there are fines and penalties provided by the statute; but it seems as if there were cases that might justify the operation—morally. But, then, again—what good would it do to punch his head? Punching his head wouldn't get me money—and if I was to try it on, finding that the licks didn't bring out the cash, I might be tempted to help myself to the cash, and that would be highway robbery; and when the puncheon ventured to suggest that, the puncheon might be tempted to silence him. Oh Lord! that's the way these murders in the first degree happen; and I think that I was almost on the point of taking the first step. I really think I look a little like Babe the pirate," added the poor man, glancing at his mild but disturbed features in the glass, "or like Captain Kidd, or leastways like Country McClusky—a regular bruiser!"

Sitting down before the grate and stirring it feebly with the poker, he tried to devise some feasible plan for supplying the vacuum in his treasury. He might borrow, but then all his friends were very poor and particularly hard up—at this special season of the year.

The bull's-eye watch might have been "spouted," if he had foreseen this contingency; but every angular relative was now, at this hour of the night, sung abed to a dead certainty. Purchasing on credit was not to be thought of, and the only toy-shop which kept open late enough for his purchases, was kept by a man to whom he was totally unknown. Time galloped on, meanwhile, and the half-hour struck.

"I'll slip that letter in the post-office, and then go home," said Simon, sorrowfully, rising as he spoke, and grasping his inseparable umbrella.

"Hallo, shipmate! where away?" cried a hoarse voice. And Mr. Quillpen became aware of the presence of an "ancient mariner," enveloped in a very rough dread-nought, and finished off with a very large amount of whiskers and tangle.

"I was going home, sir," replied Simon, with the deferential air of a very little to a very big man.

"Ay, going to clap on hatches and dead-lights. Well, tell me one thing; where away may one find Mr. Latitat—a regular landshark, d'ye see?"

"This is Mr. Latitat's office, sir!" answered Simon.

"Ay, and is he within hail?"

"No, sir, he has gone home."

"Slipped his cable—hey? just my luck! Well, one might snooze comfortably on this here table—mightn't he? You can clear out, and I'll take care of the shop till morning."

"That would be perfectly inadmissible, sir," said Simon; "the idea of a stranger's sleeping here!"

"A stranger!" cried the sailor. "Why, shipmate, do you happen to know who I am? Look at me! Don't you find somewhat of a family likeness to Lucius in my old weather-beaten mug? Why, man-alive, I'm his brother—his own brother! You must a heard him speak of me. Been cruising round the world in chase of Fortune, but could never overhaul her; been sick, shipwrecked, and now come back as poor as I went. But Lucius has got enough for both of us. How glad he'll be to see me to-morrow, eh. old ink-and-tape?"

Simon had his doubts about that matter, but told the sailor to come in the morning, and see.

"That I will," said the tar, "and start him up with a rousing Happy New Year! But I say, shipmate, I don't want to sleep in the watch-house. Have you never a shilling about you?"

Simon answered that he hadn't a penny.

"Why, don't that brother of mine give you good wages?"

"Enormous!" said Simon.

"What becomes of it all?"

"I spend it all—I'm very extravagant," said Simon, shaking his head. "And then, I'm sorry to say, your brother isn't always punctual in his payments. To-night, for instance, I couldn't get a penny from him."

"Then I tell you what I'd do, shipmate," said the sailor, confidentially. "I'd overhaul some of his letters. Steam will loosen a wafer, and a hot blade-knife wax. I'd overhaul his money-letters and pay myself. Ha! ha! do you take? Now, that letter you've got in your fin, my boy, looks woundy like a dokiment chock full of shipplasters. What do you say to making a prize of 'em? Wouldn't it be a jolly go?"

"Stand off!" said Simon, assuming a heavy round ruler, and a commanding attitude. "Don't you come anigh me, or there'll be a case of justifiable homicide here. How dare you counsel me to commit a robbery on your own brother? I wonder you ain't ashamed to look me in the face."

"A chap as has cruised as many years I have in the low latitudes ain't afraid to look anybody in the face," answered the "ancient mariner," grimly. "I made you a fair offer, shipmate, and you rejected it, like a long-shore lubber as you are. Good night to ye."

Much to his relief, the sailor took himself off, and Simon, after locking and double locking his door, went to the post-office and deposited the letter with which he had been entrusted. As he lived a good distance from the office, he did not reach home until after all the clocks of the city had struck twelve, so that he was able to surprise his little wife, who was sitting up for him, with a "Happy New Year!"

He cast a rueful eye at the line of stockings hung along the mantel-piece in the sitting-room, and then sorrowfully announced to his wife his failure to obtain money of Mr. Latitat.

"Here'll be nothing for the stockings, Me," said he, "unless what the poor children put in ours."

"I am very sorry," said his wife, who bore the announcement much better than he anticipated; "but we'll have a happy New Year for all that."

Simon's roasted potatoes were completely charred, he had been detained so late; but there was a little meal in the centre of each, and charcoal is not at all unhealthy. He went to bed, and in spite of his cares, slept the sleep of the just.

A confused babbling awoke him at daylight. "Happy New Years" and kisses were exchanged. "Oh, dear papa and mamma!" cried Bobby "what a beautiful horse I found in my stocking!"

"And what a beautiful wax-doll, with eyes that move, in mine," said Chiffy; "and such a splendid rattle and coral in baby's. Go, do go down and see what there is in yours."

"This is some of your work, little woman," whispered Simon to his wife. But the little woman denied it emphatically. Much mystified, he hurried down to the breakfast-room. The children had made the usual offering of very hard and highly-cloured sugar-plums; but in each of the two large stockings, stowed away at the bottom, was a roll of bank-notes, one hundred pounds in each.

"Somebody wants to ruin us!" cried Simon, bursting into tears. "This is stolen money, and they want to lay it on to us."

"All I know about it," said Mrs. Quillpen, "is that last night, just before you came home, a sailor-man came here with all these things, and said they were for us, and made me promise to put them in the stockings, as he directed, and say nothing about his visit to you."

"A sailor!" cried Simon. "I have it! I think I know who it is. Good-bye—I'll be back to breakfast directly."

Simon ran to the office, and found, as he anticipated, Mr. Latitat there before him.

"A happy New Year to you, sir," said he. "Have you seen your brother?"

"I have not," replied Mr. Latitat.

Simon then told him all that happened on the preceding night; the apparition of the sailor, the temptation, the money found in the stockings, in proof of which he showed the notes, and stating his fears that they had been stolen, offered to deposit them in his employer's hands.

"Keep 'em, shipmate, they were meant for you!" exclaimed Mr. Latitat, suddenly and queerly, assuming the very voice and look of the nautical brother of the preceding evening.

While Simon stared his eyes out of his head, Mr. Latitat informed him that he had no brother; that he had disguised himself for the purpose of putting his clerk's long-tried fidelity to a final test, and that sustained triumphantly, had rewarded him in the manner we have seen. He told how, disgusted in early life, by the treachery and ingratitude of friends and relations who had combined to ruin him, he had become a misanthrope and miser; how the spectacle of Simon's disinterested fidelity, rigid sense of honour, self-denial, and cheerfulness, had won back his better nature, and

he wound off, as he shook Quillpen warmly by the hand, by announcing that he had raised his salary to two hundred and fifty pounds per annum.

The good news almost killed Simon.

"Please, your honour," said he, endeavouring to frame an appropriate reply, "no—that ain't it—please your excellency, you've gone and done it—you've gone and done it! I was Baron Rothschild before, and now—no, I can't tell what I am; it isn't in no biographical dictionary, and I don't believe it's in the *Wealth of Nations*!"

"Well, never mind," said Latitat, laughing. "go home and tell Mrs. Q. the office won't be open till to-morrow, and that I shall depend on dining with you all to-day."

F. A. D.

THUNDERBOLT AND LIGHTFOOT.

JOHN DOHERTY, *alias* Captain Thunderbolt, was born in Scotland, somewhere about the year 1780. In his youth he was sent to school, and received a very good education. He had a clear, active intellect, was quick to perceive and learn, and, with a proper moral balance and fair opportunity, would undoubtedly have made a man of respectable distinction. But he was by nature a rogue—a rascal at heart, if not a villain. He had some redeeming qualities, but not enough to keep him in the path of rectitude. He was worldly, passionate and licentious, and could not see the advantage of being honest for honesty's sake, if dishonesty would better serve his immediate purpose. He was selfish in his own pleasures, and would stop at nothing to gain his ends and gratify his dominant whim. He was naturally a great leveller, and looked upon the stringent laws of society as made for the benefit of the rich rather than the poor, and thought it the proper course of every man of spirit to set them at defiance. He had his own idea of honour, was averse to cruelty and bloodshed, and possessed certain chivalric notions of propriety. Through his long career of vice and crime, it was his boast that he had never intentionally robbed a poor man or a female. He was bold and fearless, and would risk everything to carry out some romantic idea, or obtain what he was wont to term poetical justice.

A case in point. A certain judge once boasted that he would yet have the pleasure of giving Captain Thunderbolt his death-sentence.

A few nights after, a very staid old quaker called on him, at his private residence, and requested to see him alone a few minutes, on some important business. On being ushered into the presence of the judge, in his library, the stranger very coolly repeated the words his lordship had used; and then, drawing a pistol, declared that he himself was the veritable Thunderbolt, and that he had come to lay his lordship under contribution for making so foolish a boast. In short, he demanded his lordship's watch, purse, and jewellery; and having obtained treasure to the value of nearly a thousand pounds, he quietly departed, with the threat that, if followed, he would blow his lordship's brains out the next time they should meet.

He was not followed; and the chagrined judge, not caring to be laughed at by his friends, kept the matter a secret for years, and then only revealed it to a confidential few.

Thunderbolt was benevolent in his way—that is, he would give a poor man a portion of what he had taken from his rich neighbour; and whenever he chanced, in any of his wild pranks or exploits, to injure one of the inferior class, he would never rest easy till he had made what he considered a suitable recompense to him or his family.

At what precise age John Doherty took to the road as a profession, and assumed the name of Thunderbolt, which subsequently became such a word of terror throughout the United Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, does not appear—though it is certain he commenced his wild career quite young, and was soon discarded by his family and youthful friends. His wonderful exploits, his almost incredible boldness and daring, and his thousand hair-breadth escapes, savoured more of the romance of the past ages than of the realities of the present century; and no modern writer of fiction would venture to place an imaginary hero in so many situations of peril, and expect to extricate him by what would seem so many invented, unnatural chances.

He had a wonderful faculty of disguising himself, and could so change his appearance in a few minutes, that his most intimate acquaintance might pass him without recognition. Now as a priest, zealously expounding the doctrines of the Church; anon as a beggar, beseeching charity; now as a quaker, proclaiming his non-resistant notions of peace; anon as a soldier, fighting over the battles of his country; now as a pedlar, trying to dispose of his petty wares; anon as a huntsman, deeply interested in the subjects of game and poachers; now as a gentleman, travelling

to kill *enmi*—anon as a doctor, prepared to effect remarkable cures.

He was continually roving over the United Kingdoms, robbing men on the highway, stealing horses, and changing localities with a rapidity that defied all attempts at detection and arrest.

He made his assumed name of Thunderbolt a word of terror throughout Great Britain; and though small bills and posters were out in every quarter, describing his person and offering large rewards for his apprehension, yet, by reason of his rapid change of places, and complete disguises, he was often enabled to safely lodge at an inn, where the principal topic of public discussion was his own wonderful exploits and hair-breadth escapes, in which deeply interesting conversation to him he sometimes joined, in a very learned and edifying manner. He had a fearful reputation for years before he became connected with his subsequent partner in crime, Captain Lightfoot—so much so, even, that when he confidentially announced his name to the latter, who had himself been a thieving villain all his life, the fellow actually turned pale and trembled, and would have fled, had he not been completely in the power of his strange companion.

John Martin *alias* Michael Martin, *alias* John Hendley, *alias* Captain Lightfoot, was born near the city of Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1795. Of his early life it is only necessary to say he was a good-for-nothing, thieving rascal, and finally had to leave home on account of his vicious habits and propensities—his own family, and all his relations, who seem to have been quite respectable people, being glad to get rid of so worthless a fellow.

When about twenty years of age, and while roaming about the country a regular vagabond, he stopped at an inn where he first fell in with John Doherty, *alias* Captain Thunderbolt, who, it appears, not only knew him by sight, but all about his character.

The wily highwayman, who wanted a companion in crime, at once settled in his own mind that the strong, robust, foot-fetted, unprincipled Martin was the man for his purpose.

The redoubtable robber was at this time passing himself off as a Protestant clergyman; and his elegant attire, his tall, commanding person, his strongly-marked, expressive features, and his peculiar style of conversation, were sufficient to impose this deception upon all the inmates of the inn, including Martin himself.

To the latter, Thunderbolt did not reveal himself at once; but gradually wormed himself into his confidence; plied him with liquor, and then mystified him by talking religion and robberies alternately.

At last, when he had thus insidiously drawn all of Martin's secrets from him, and felt that he had him completely in his power, he made himself known, to the utter astonishment and alarm of the man of lesser crimes.

But Martin, in such congenial company, soon recovered himself; and, lending a willing ear, it did not take long for the highwayman to persuade him to join his future with him.

As soon as he had gained his consent to the compact, he dashed a glass of brandy in his face and named him Captain Lightfoot.

On the second night of their companionship a tumult was heard in the yard of the inn; and Thunderbolt, ever on the alert for danger, said it was probably soldiers in pursuit of himself. Then telling Lightfoot where to meet him, he opened the window, leaped out, and made his escape.

The first road exploit of Lightfoot was to rob, in broad daylight, a party of four gentlemen, on their way to join a hunt. This he did under the direction of his superior, who remained in the back-ground—ready, however, to come to his assistance, if needed. He commanded the four men to dismount and submit to a search, which they did. He took what money and articles of value he found on their persons, compelled one of them to change his coat and hat with him, and then, selecting the best horse for his own use, rode quietly away—a piece of impudent daring that scarcely has a parallel.

This was the beginning of a series of exploits together, in which they seemed to strive to make each succeeding one more audacious than the rest. They dashed about the country in every direction, boldly entered different cities, and carried everything with a high hand.

A high price was set upon their heads, and they were constantly followed by the emissaries of justice.

On several occasions they were pursued by squads of cavalry and shot at, but still they seemed possessed of charmed lives.

They boldly entered the city of Cork, put up at an inn, and actually spent three days there in drinking and carousing, on the money they had stolen on their way thither. Discovering at last that they were suspected, they left suddenly and on foot.

At Doneraile, they found an advertisement, in the

house where they took lodgings, giving an exact description of their appearance.

The next morning, Lightfoot saw several persons, among them soldiers, approaching the inn; and waking Thunderbolt, who was sleeping with his clothes on, they rushed down-stairs, the latter knocking down the landlord, who attempted to stop them.

They started across the fields, and the soldiers pursued and fired at them. One ball struck Thunderbolt in the calf of his leg, and so impeded his running, that it was only with the greatest difficulty he succeeded in making his escape.

They finally concealed themselves in a wood, and Lightfoot cut the ball out of Thunderbolt's leg, and both remained here several days, till the latter was able to travel again.

After this, they had the audacity to enter Clonmel, and attend the criminal court, where some United Irishmen were being tried, whom they even talked of liberating.

They next pushed on to Dublin, stealing horses and robbing travellers every few miles of their journey. At Dublin they robbed four priests, and were pursued by a party of soldiers. Lightfoot outran them, and Thunderbolt plunged into the river and escaped by swimming.

After numerous adventures of a like nature, both in Ireland and Scotland, Lightfoot, against the advice of his partner, set off alone to rob a stage-coach, full of passengers, in broad daylight. He succeeded in cutting off several trunks, but got nothing of value.

On returning to Dublin, in search of his companion, he heard he had sailed for the West Indies; and, finding the country getting rather too warm for himself, he embarked for America, and landed at Salem, Massachusetts.

He now made an effort to reform his vicious habits, hired himself out as a labourer, and worked steadily for more than a year; but at length fell to drinking and quarrelling, and got his discharge.

About this time he heard of the death of his father, and received from his brother a few hundred pounds as his share of his father's estate. With this money he went to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and purchased a small brewery. Here he failed in business, and was sold out by the sheriff. Becoming disgusted, discouraged, and reckless, he returned to the road, and perpetrated a series of robberies in that country, which, for romantic daring, rivalled those in his native land.

Being at length in Boston, on the day of a military parade, and hearing that the governor of Massachusetts was to give a dinner-party at Medford, he had the audacity to go thither, watch the house for the leaving of the guests, and actually succeeded in robbing a Major Bray on his way home from the festival. He followed up this robbery with one or two others, and was at last apprehended in Springfield. He was subsequently taken to Cambridge, tried, convicted, and condemned to be hung.

After his sentence, he was put in irons and confined in a dungeon. He managed to cut his irons, knock down the turnkey and get out of prison, but was again arrested before he could make his escape. The extreme penalty of the law was finally carried into effect, on the twenty-second of December, 1821. Thus ignominiously perished this bold, bad man, in the very prime of early manhood, being only six-and-twenty years of age.

Of the fate of Thunderbolt nothing is positively known; but about the period he was supposed to leave Ireland, a Scotchman, answering his description, arrived at a small town in Vermont, by the Boston stage. This man, who gave his name as John Wilson, remained in the place for three or four years, teaching school in the winter season and gradually getting into the practice of medicine. He was always a mysterious kind of a man, would never give any account of his early life, and invariably left the room whenever a stranger was about to be ushered in.

He next settled in the town of New Fane, Wyndham county, and set up as a physician and surgeon; but finally removed to Brattleboro', where he subsequently married, separated from his wife, and at last died, leaving one child, a son.

During his last illness he would not suffer his clothes to be removed—not even his neckerchief.

After his death, it was discovered that the calf of his leg was withered by reason of an old wound, that his neck was much scarified, and that he had a cork heel.

Among his effects were two double-barrelled guns, four horse-pistols, six duelling pistols, a number of swords, a dozen walking-canes, and a great variety of powder-horns, shot-bags, bullet-pouches, and so forth.

Doctor John Wilson may have been devoid of crime, but busy suspicion pointed to his dead body as the mortal remains of the lost John Doherty, the terrible Captain Thunderbolt of other days!

What a moral may be drawn from the end of such a career!

a man, who, in the path of rectitude, might have been a brilliant ornament to society, and gone down to an honoured grave! E. B.

FISH CULTURE.

Turn art of fish breeding has, during the last twenty years, been extensively practised in France, and has recently been brought to a focus in the establishment constructed for the reception and distribution of fish ova at Huningue, near Basle, on the Rhine. The artificial system of spawning fish (i.e., by hand manipulation) owes its success to the fact of the rendering fruitful of fish eggs being an external act—in other words, the roe of the female is not made productive by the milt of the male fish till after it has been deposited in its watery bed. An observant fisherman of the department of La Bresse, in the Vosges, was the first in France to discern that the natural principle of fish fecundation could be easily imitated, and so be turned to profitable account in the pursuit of his business.

Joseph Remy, the re-discoverer of fish culture, was an unlettered peasant, and therefore unacquainted with the fact that fish breeding had been practised in China from the remotest times, with such success as to make fish one of the cheapest luxuries of that great country, or that the art was known in its utmost perfection in the classic days of Italy. Nor was he aware that one Gottlieb had practised it in Germany a century before him, and most likely he was even ignorant of the salmon breeding experiments of Mr. Shaw at Drumlairig Castle, in Scotland, during the years 1837-8. Remy, so far as the breeding of fish for commercial purposes is concerned, is undoubtedly entitled to all the praise of an original discoverer, and his own narrative of how he came to try the artificial system is explanatory of what is still a grievance and a misfortune—viz., the growing scarcity of our fresh-water fishes.

Remy, knowing how enormously prolific all kinds of fish naturally are, most of them yielding their eggs by tens of thousands, could not understand how they were yearly becoming less plentiful, but, setting his eyes to observe and his wits to work out the question, he found—1st, that an immense proportion of the ova was never properly fecundated; 2nd, that even if all the eggs obtained the benefit of the milt, a vast proportion never came to life, from being deposited in places where they were ultimately bereft of water, that others were eaten by waterfowl, or devoured by other fishes, and a proportion swept away to the sea, and so lost for ever. Then, again, he found that however large a proportion of the eggs might ripen, and so become fish, a high percentage of these might never become of any food value, as they were killed in their infancy by juvenile anglers, or preyed upon by larger fishes. Therefore Remy soon saw that the best way to increase the supply was by obtaining the eggs, and protecting the young fish, till they were able to take care of themselves.

Having arrived at these conclusions, he set to work to collect in the various rivers of his native district the spawn of such fishes as could be most readily obtained; these were hatched into life, and protected and fed while young. But, not contented with this laborious plan, Remy was wont to watch for and obtain the gravid fish, and so acquire the ova, in what we may term wholesale quantities, by the system of artificial spawning. Having assumed M. Gelin as a partner in his art, his experiments were largely extended, and were early crowned with a success far beyond what he ever anticipated. This was speedily demonstrated in the constantly increasing fish supply of his native streams. Messrs. Gelin and Remy were at once rewarded with a sum of money, and an elegant bronze medal was unanimously voted to them by the *Société d'Emulation des Vosges*. Besides these rewards, the fishermen were handsomely noticed in 1849, in a paper communicated by Dr. Huxo, of Epinal, to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, which at once fixed public attention on the art of cultivating the increase and growth of fish, and attracted to it the patronage of the French Government, whose first act was to reward and employ the two fishermen.

After the matter was taken in hand by the Government the spread of pisciculture in France was rapid—so rapid, that at present no stream need be without a plentiful supply of fish, as any quantity of eggs can be obtained from the establishment at Huningue for the mere asking, and from that source many of the rivers are now leaping with fish. Indeed the annual distribution of fish eggs is numbered by millions; the quantity of ova supplied last year to various applicants was over 17,000,000, some of which came to England and were deposited in the river Thames.

Much of the success of this artificial culture must be attributed to the great personal interest taken in the advancement of the art by Professor Coste, of the Institute. It is not too much to say that he has re-

created the French fisheries, both in the fresh water, and in the sea.

A year or two ago might be seen in the Collège of France, an apparatus, contained in a space about 16ft. square, which was capable of hatching 150,000 salmon eggs.

An immense deal can be done in fish hatching in a small space. Ample evidence of this may be had at the Establishment for Fish Culture, near Basle, where the boxes containing the eggs are arranged in pyramidal groups, the water flowing from the one on the top to those beneath it; and, of course, flooding all the eggs, which are nicely disposed on little glass gratings or frames. This establishment does not breed any fish except for the purpose of study or acclimatizing—it is a mere depot for the collection and distribution of eggs.

Fish eggs when first deposited by the fish will not bear to be much handled or carried to a great distance; carefully packed in wet moss they may be sent a day's journey, hence the necessity for having the piscicultural establishment at the boundary of the two countries—i.e., France and Switzerland, the greater proportion of the eggs being obtained from the latter country. They are collected by agents in the lakes and streams of Switzerland, and paid for at so much per thousand by the authorities.

The various buildings at Huningue were specially erected by M. Coumes, the chief engineer of the Rhine, for the purposes of pisciculture.

A few figures will show what has been achieved in the distribution of ova during the last two years. The winter operations of the season 1860-61 were begun on the 20th of October, 1860, and finished on the 17th of March, 1861, thus occupying a period of 149 days. The various species of fish distributed were the common great lake and salmon trout, the Rhine salmon, the Ombre chevalier, and the ferra. Of the first five of these species, the total quantity of ova provided has been estimated at nearly 6,000,000, of which about 34 per cent. perished during the period of incubation. Of the remainder, about 3,500,000 were forwarded to different parts of the continent, and a little more than 500,000 were retained for experiments at the establishment. The quantity of ova despatched from Huningue, in the season of 1860-61, was sent in reply to 278 demands from establishments scattered over 70 departments of France, and there were 29 demands from establishments in other parts of Europe, principally in Belgium, Switzerland, Bavaria, and Wurtemberg.

The hatching of the ferra is carried on separately from that of other species. The operations connected with the distribution of the ferra occupied a period of 46 days, commencing on the 14th of November. The quantity of ova of the ferra forwarded, far exceeds that of the other five species taken together, and for the season of 1860-61 is estimated at close upon 9,000,000 of eggs, of which 5,573,000, or 62 per cent., was distributed as above, while upwards of 3,000,000, or 38 per cent., were retained for the experiments connected with the establishment. The loss of eggs while the operations connected with the distribution of the ferra was being conducted, was only 22,000—a mere trifle in such a large quantity. The total number of eggs provided for the season 1860-61 was 14,726,106, of which 134 per cent. were lost, 59 per cent. distributed, and 27 per cent. retained at head-quarters.

When we consider the enormous reproductive power of all kinds of fish we have no cause to think this distribution of ova large. A female salmon yields her eggs by the thousand for every pound of her weight. The carp, the trout, the perch, and all the other kinds are equally prolific, and give their eggs in tens of thousands.

Another hatching at Huningue for the same season began in the spring—viz., on the 16th of March, and lasted for 41 days. The quantity of ova provided of the Danube salmon and the Ombre Commun, was 1,671,500, of which more than one-half perished during the incubation, and the remainder was distributed throughout Bavaria and Switzerland, or retained for the purposes of the establishment. The operations in connection with the Ombre chevalier, it may be stated, are, so far as money value is concerned, the most expensive, as it is calculated that each egg costs one penny; all the others are cheap enough, a penny a dozen being about the rate.

The operations of the season 1861 and 1862 began on the 24th of October of the former year, and were carried down till the 7th of March, 1862, thus being spread over a period of 135 days. The quantity of ova of the five chief fishes already mentioned in connexion with the operations of season 1860-61 was estimated at 6,382,000, of which quantity more than 24 millions were lost during the periods of incubation; 38 per cent. of the eggs were despatched to different places, and about half a million was kept for experimenting with. Operations with the ova of the ferra began on the 16th of November, and lasted for 40 days. The ova provided are estimated at 12,000,000 of eggs, 80 per cent. of which were distributed, the rest being re-

tained at Hünigues. The percentage of loss on this hatching was exceedingly small.

The spring hatching of the ova of the Danube salmon and the Ombre Commun began on the 30th of March and lasted 19 days. The quantity of ova of these fishes was small as compared with the other hatchings, and the results not nearly so satisfactory, about one-half of the eggs having perished during the period of incubation. In the season of 1861 and 1862, 296 demands from establishments in 79 departments of France, and 39 from establishments in other parts of Europe, were received and attended to. The total quantity of ova passed through the hands of the manipulators was 18,377,990, of which 2,614,400, or 15 per cent., was lost; 12,879,000, or 70 per cent., was distributed, and 2,884,500, or 15 per cent., retained for experiments at the establishment at Hünigues.

Some interesting fresh-water fish breeding experiments have likewise been conducted in Germany, in particular with the large Danube salmon. This remarkable fish is highly susceptible of the piscicultural process, and might easily be acclimatized in such British streams as are at present destitute of *salmo salar*. This fish, we are told, grows quickly, and attains, in a shorter time than many of our fishes, to a gigantic size. It is not migratory in the sense of our salmon—that is, it never leaves the fresh waters.

In order to show that it is possible to invade even the domain of Neptune we may mention, *en passant* (the subject being big enough for separate discussion), that oyster-culture in the bays of Normandy and Brittany has been largely pursued, and with very great success, many little fortunes having been made by the oyster farmers of Marennes and other places. The oyster farm is a splendid example of that detailed industry so familiar to the French. The oyster spat is sought on trusses of branches, and the young oysters are grown till they are of a proper marketable size. The trusses are easily examined, and only those oysters which are fit for sale. The truss being stripped of these, is again let into the water, in order that the small oysters may carry till their beads be grown. Our Whistable men are very industrious, but they do not come up to the French, who grow the dainty animal from the seed, and even grow the seed itself on a systematic plan.

Experiments are now being tried by M. Coste on the French crustaceans, and on various kinds of sea-fish, that gentleman being of opinion that it is easy, and far more profitable, to cultivate the water as the land, and to produce fish than to hunt for them.

Turning our attention from the continent to this country, let us see what we have been doing towards pisciculture. It is now over two years since the first progress made in salmon breeding in the ponds at Stormontfield, on the river Tay, near Perth, in Scotland, was publicly noticed. The first hatching on the artificial plan took place at Stormontfield, in November and December, 1853, the operations being conducted by Mr. Ramsbottom, an eminent practical piscicultural manipulator. It was eminently successful, the whole of the 300 boxes being stocked, at the rate of 1,000 eggs per box. The fifth hatching, which was performed in November and December, 1859, was also highly successful, resulting in the addition of 250,000 smolts to the salmon stock of the river Tay. The whole of the proceedings connected with this salmon nursery at Stormontfield have been watched with great interest by the naturalists, as well as by some interested in the development of the salmon fisheries, in a commercial aspect.

Various experiments have been made from year to year by Mr. Buist, the conservator of the Tay fisheries, with the view of ascertaining the rate at which the salmon grow. These ponds afforded him ample facilities for watching and identifying the fish, which were marked in various ways before being let into the river. The pond-bred salmon were found to grow very rapidly.

Of salmon fry liberated for their sea voyage in May, many were taken in July of this weight of from 4 lbs. to 7 lbs. The most curious fact in the natural history of this valuable fish is, that of two salmon spawned at the same time one may visit the sea and become a grilse of 4 lb. weight, while the other is still a little part of 200, and in the succeeding twelve months, the one may be a nicely grown salmon of 12 lb., while the other, having only just assumed the scales of the smolt, is timidly venturing down the river to pay its first visit to the sea.

The exact results of the latest hatching at these ponds will not be ascertained for a few months yet. The spawning was begun on Martinmas-day, 1862, and was concluded on the 2nd of December of that year—the operation of spawning is thus protracted from the difficulty of obtaining fish with the mill and so perfectly ripe.

Mr. Buist, the conservator, found it necessary to the success of that year's spawning to capture 119 full-grown salmon, and 231 grilse, and out of these 18

salmon and 22 grilse were selected for manipulation, and the number of ripe eggs obtained from the lot was 275,000. Most of the fish spawned were females, and it may be noted here that the mill of a single male fish will fructify the eggs of two or more females. These eggs, with a slight percentage of waste, all came to life, and in the comparatively short space of 115 days; former hatchings having taken from 15 to 25 days longer.

From the success which has attended the Stormontfield experiments, the lessee of a salmon fishery on the River Ugie, in Banffshire, has commenced breeding on a small scale. He has modelled his ponds on those near Perth, and has provided accommodation for the hatching of 40,000 eggs. This experiment being as yet only in its infancy need not here be further alluded to.

Another experiment in salmon breeding is now being carried on in the stowatory of Kirkcudbright, also in Scotland; but it is as yet ripe for description.

The best operations in salmon breeding, however, are being carried on in Ireland. They are the best as regards their magnitude, and in the fact of their having introduced salmon into rivers which were formerly inaccessible to that fish. The fisheries alluded to belong to the Messrs. Ashworth, who take a great interest in all questions relating to pisciculture and the natural history of all kinds of fish, and who have, by means of artificial breeding, increased the money value of their fisheries twenty-fold. One of their experiments, a most economical one, it must be confessed, consisted in stocking a suit of breeding boxes with nearly 800,000 eggs, at a cost of nearly £18 sterling. But the great merit of these gentlemen consists in their having converted Lough Mask and Carrig salmon ponds—ponds embracing an area of 25,000 acres of water.

A large cut has been made through a natural barrier of rocks which prevented the ascent of the salmon to a higher point than Lough Corrib, and Mr. Thomas Ashworth expects, in a short time, that the salmon will be abundant on this new field of water. The fish passage alluded to above, is nearly two miles in length, and was constructed at an expense of about £700, but an ample interest will, in due time, be returned both for this outlay and for the yearly expenses of the whole fishery. Mr. Ashworth says himself that it is much more profitable to breed salmon than sheep. The French people eat all kinds of fish, whether they be from the sea, the river, the lake, or the canal, but in Scotland and Ireland the salmon only is bred artificially, because it is a valuable and money yielding article, and no other fish is regarded in these countries as being of value, except for sport. In France large quantities of eels are bred and eaten; but in Scotland and some parts of England, the people have such a horror of that fish that they will not touch it. This of course is a mere prejudice, as the eel is good food for in a very high degree.

In all Roman Catholic countries there are so many fast days that fish food becomes to the people an essential article of diet; in France this is so, and the consequence is that a good many private amateurs in pisciculture are to be found throughout the empire; but the mission of the French Government in connexion with fish culture is apparently to meddle only with the rearing and acclimatizing of the more valuable fishes; it would be a waste of energy for the authorities at Hünigues to commence the culture of the carp or perch. In this Protestant country there is no demand for the commoner river or lake fishes, except for the purposes of sport; and with one or two exceptions, such as the Lochleven trout, the charr, &c., there is no commerce carried on in these fishes. One has but to visit the fish market at Paris to observe that all kinds of fresh-water fish and river crustaceans are there ranked as saleable and largely purchased.

Some schemes for the extension of pisciculture in England are now being matured. Dr. Beckland has himself described in a lecture, his experiments of fish hatching in the Thames; how they will succeed must be left to time to develop. If a great series of breeding ponds were constructed to feed the Severn, it would tend to the multiplication of our finest salmon, and would surely raise the fish rental of that fine river to a very high point.

AGES OF THE "UPPER-THE-TIMES."—We find that the oldest duke is the Duke of Cleveland, aged 75; the youngest the Duke of Norfolk, aged 16; the oldest marquis, the Marquis of Westminster, aged 78; the youngest, the Marquis of Ely, aged 14; the oldest earl (since the death of the Earl of Chancery on the 20th December, aged 88) is the Earl of Stair, aged 87; the youngest, the Earl of Charleville, aged 11; the oldest viscount, Viscount Combermere, aged 90; the youngest, Viscount Down, aged 13; the oldest baron is Lord Brougham, aged 85; the youngest, Lord

Rosmore, aged 12; the oldest member of the Privy Council is Viscount Combermere, aged 90; the youngest, the Prince of Wales, aged 22; the oldest member of the House of Commons is Gen. Hon. Sir Hugh Arbuthnot, member for Kincardineshire, aged 84; the youngest is Hon. Charles E. D. H. Tracy, member for Montgomery, aged 28; the oldest judge in England is the Right Hon. Stephen Lushington, aged 81; the youngest, Sir James P. Wilde, aged 47; the oldest judge in Ireland is Chief Justice Lefroy, aged 87; the youngest, Justice Keogh, aged 46; the oldest Scotch Lord of Session is the Lord Justice-General, aged 70; the youngest the Lord Justice Clark, aged 59; the oldest archbishop is the Archbishop of Canterbury, aged 69; the youngest, the Archbishop of York, aged 44; the oldest bishop is the Bishop of Exeter, aged 84; the youngest, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, aged 44; the oldest colonial bishop is the bishop of Toronto, aged 84; the youngest the Bishop of Nassau, aged 37; the oldest baronet is Sir William W. Dalling, aged 89; the youngest, Sir George R. Sitwell, aged 37; the oldest civil or military knight is General Sir Arthur B. Clifton, aged 91; the youngest, Sir Charles T. Bright, aged 31.

AN EXTRAORDINARY MIND.

A LETTER from India says: Let me tell you of a wonderful chessplayer, an account of whose performance I received lately from a distinguished and learned Hindoo Pandit here, Ram Shandah Bal Chreshni.

The chessplayer came from Madras to Bombay, where Ram Shandah saw him. He is between 45 and 50 years of age. He plays every game, three, if I remember, blindfold, and wins them. At the same time he plays a game of cards—these are 130 different cards, in a Hindoo pack—and wins.

At the time when these games are going on, he is given orally some multiplication to the extent of four figures (e.g. 9387 by 2999), and gives the correct result. At the same time a sentence of about one hundred words, each word being numbered, is given to him irregularly (85 if, 92 but, 61 pitcher, &c.), and he gives the whole sentence.

During the games a bell is touched every one or two seconds, and he gives the number of times it has been touched. A man stands behind him and throws little pebbles, one by one, against his back; these too, he counts. And after the games are over, and all these are told, he recites a poem in perfect rhyme which he has composed during the sitting. Ram Shandah is, I assure you, an entirely credible witness, and a very clever man every way.

SERGENT COOKS.—In order to improve the cookery of soldiers' rations, a sergeant cook from each battalion has been for some months under instruction in the art, and his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief has now issued a circular directing a methodical arrangement of the duty in every regiment.

MORETON-IN-THE-MARSH AND KING CHARLES I.—Last night (Dec. 12, 1863), I slept in a room at the White Hart Hotel, in Moreton-in-the-Marsh, Gloucestershire; and this morning I therein read upon a card, yellow with age, and torn around the edges, but which has since been carefully mounted, and is now preserved by glass and a gilt frame, the following lines and memorandum:—

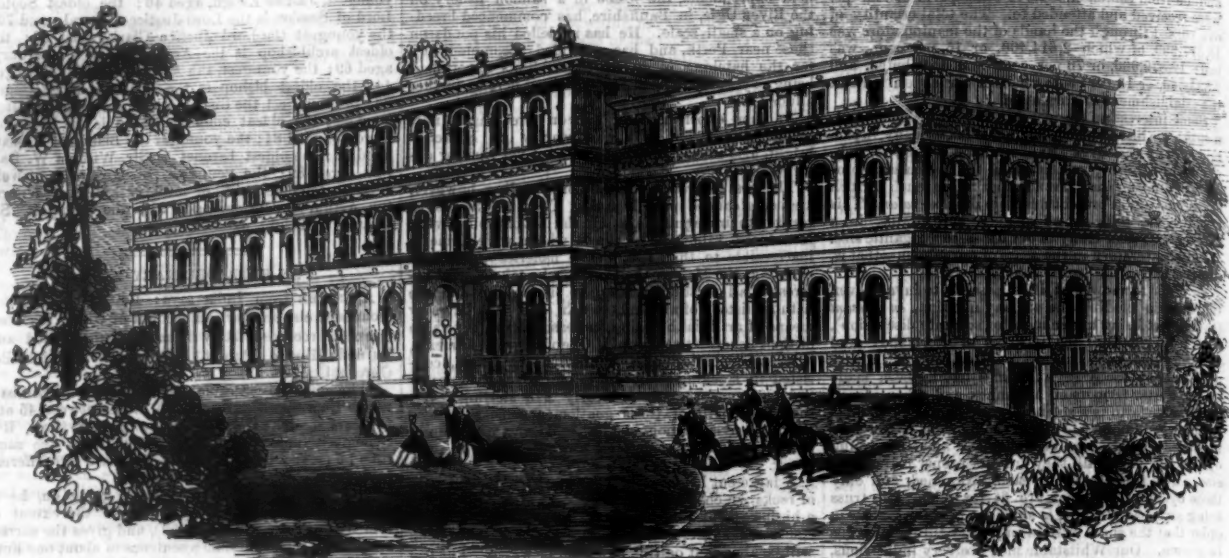
When friends were few and dangers near
King Charles found rest and safety here.
King Charles I.
Slept at this inn on his way to a court
to Evesham, Tuesday, July 2, 1648.

The ink is faded by time, and the handwriting is in that hard style so fashionable in years gone by. Upon inquiry in the hotel, I found that the bedroom bore the name of King Charles I.'s room, and was still the best bedroom in the hotel.—Notes and Queries.

HER MAJESTY has expressed a strong opinion against any important change being made again in the uniform of the Royal Navy.

OIL WELLS IN RUSSIA.—A district has been discovered in Russia of similar formation to that of the oil-producing regions of Pennsylvania and other parts of America. Colonel Gowan, the enterprising American, has obtained a concession from the Russian Government, of a tract of 50,000 acres, upon which he is to carry on his exploitations. He is on his way to America to obtain the necessary machinery.

POISONING WITH SALT-PETER.—An inquest has recently been held at Oswestry on a man named Wilson, who had been supplied by a chemist with several packets of saltpetre in mistake for Epsom salts. It appeared that these two articles were put in adjoining drawers in the shop. Verdict, "Accidental death." Is it possible that the jury separated without passing some censure upon the druggist who supplied the poisonous dose?



[PALACE OF THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LOUIS OF HESSE.]

THE NEW PALACE IN DARMSTADT.

DARMSTADT is the capital of the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, standing in a sandy plain on the Darmbach, fifteen miles to the south of Frankfurt. It consists of an old and a new town; and is encompassed by walls and ditches. It contains several handsome squares; and is the birth-place of Liebig, the celebrated chemist.

Here a palace is being built for their Royal Highnesses Prince and Princess Louis of Hesse, and will, therefore, become the home of a member of the Royal family. The site upon which the new building is rising is the property of the crown, and was formerly used as a sort of botanical garden, and will now be laid out for the use of the Prince and Princess. Being situate in the highest part of the town, with a gentle slope from east to west, this *parterre* combines all the advantages of a site at once healthy and beautiful. The view from the first floor of the palace, over the garden and the wide valley of the Rhine towards the hills of the Palatinate, the hills near Mayence, and the Taurus mountains, may be characterized as truly delightful.

The palace is to be in the Italian style of architecture—a style which prevailed in Italy during the fourteenth and the two following centuries, but more especially during the fifteenth, from which circumstance it received also the designation of the *cinquecento* style.

It may be observed that the term Italian does not include every style and class of building to be found in Italy, but is restricted to that style which was reduced from the ancient Roman or classical method of building. To attach to this style anything like a precise or definite character would be, perhaps, impossible, on account of the many varieties of design and different modes of treatment it exhibits. It has, however, many admirers. One of its leading characteristics is its partiality for fenestration, or the introduction of windows to such an extent as to form a marked feature in the design. This is one of the principal points in which it differs from classical art. As fenestration reduces columnation to a mere secondary position, rendering it only an accessory for the adornment of only portions of an edifice, it has been resorted to by the Italians, and they have erected many beautiful structures in this style. The architects of Italy, however, do not rigidly adhere to one sort of architecture. There are three kinds which obtain in that country, and which, with a very decided similarity in general treatment, have peculiarities sufficient to dis-

tinguish them from each other. These three kinds are named after the cities in which they each prevailed; not that any of the styles were in use at any place to the exclusion of the others, but that each style was predominant in its own locality. The cities are Florence, Rome, and Venice, and the classes take their designations from them, and are called the Florentine, Roman, and Venetian.

The architecture of the Florentine palaces is very peculiar, being strong, massive, and severe. From being possessed of these qualities, it may be distinguished as grand, but at the same time gloomy and heavy, presenting the appearance of fortresses, rather than the residence of quiet people, engaged in the peaceful pursuits of mercantile life. They, nevertheless, excel those of Rome and Venice in dignity and grandeur, but do not approach them in lightness and elegance. They are, also, inferior in refinement of detail, but surpass all others in bold and imposing masses.

The palace of Darmstadt stands at a distance of forty yards from the east end of the garden referred to, and consists of a principal or centre part, and two adjoining wings. The back elevation, or garden front of the former is enriched by a projecting rotunda, winged on both sides by terraces and flights of steps leading to the garden. The principal front has a projecting entrance-porch, constructed in such a manner that carriages may drive under it, and allow visitors to alight under cover. This porch forms a spacious balcony, with a balustrade on the top.

On entering this porch, appear the entrance-hall and principal staircase, 52 feet by 32 feet, the latter being approached by columns of the Ionic order. The centre flight of steps is twelve feet, and the two upper flights are ten feet wide. The staircase and hall are lighted by a large skylight, with a stained glass cupola beneath. The ceiling round the cupola is to be richly decorated. The principal staircase is of black Belgian marble, polished, and is decorated with a rich bronze balustrade.

The plan of each floor is arranged in such a manner that the whole of the private apartments can be separated from the other parts of the building, by closing the two doors of the corridor, an arrangement by which the private apartments are left undisturbed. In the third story are the nursery and visitors' rooms, saloons, and bedrooms of the ladies in waiting. In the right wing, above the ball-room, are the female servants' bedrooms and wardrobes, the latter part of the building being in communication with the basement story by back-stairs, for the use of servants and musicians only. The basement-floor includes the bath-

rooms, store-rooms, servants' hall, kitchens, larder, scullery, pantry, still-room, housekeeper's, butler's, cook's, and steward's apartments, the footmen's bedrooms, and the usual domestic offices which the comfort of a royal dwelling requires. Beneath the basement floor is a wine-cellar.

The walls of this palace are of brick. The rusticated plinth, the columns, the archivolts, the architraves, and cornices are of red sandstone from the quarries of the Odenwald and the banks of the Main. The decorative parts of the cornices, as dentils, &c., the capitals of the columns and pilasters, the balustrades, the sculptured frieze, having medallions with trophies and other suitable emblems, and the festoons are executed in terra-cotta.

Of the external decorations, the rose, shamrock, and thistle, the Hessian arms surrounded by the garter, and the English arms, form characteristic and ornamental parts. It is erected from a design by Mr. Conrad Kraus, and will be a great ornament to the town of Darmstadt.

ALL the private papers belonging to the late Prince Consort have been forwarded from Osborne to Windsor Castle.

THE Berlin papers report the death of the King's head-gardener (Fintelmann), at Charlottenburg, on Christmas Day, at the age of ninety. When young he was employed at Sans Souci, and he loved to tell how Frederick the Great used to point to the finest age with his cane, and make him fetch them down from the trees. It was he who cultivated the first dahlias, which Alexander von Humboldt introduced into Prussia, and to him are due the chief attractions of the gardens on Peacock's Island, near Potsdam, the favourite resort of Frederick William III.

A DREAM AND ITS FULFILLMENT.—Two well-bred terriers belonging to Mr. James Phillips, of Norstead, having been missed several days, it was conjectured they were stolen; but Mr. Galloway, innkeeper at Greenstreet Green, knowing their habits, was fully impressed with an idea that in their eager pursuit for rabbits they might have buried themselves in some bunny's subterranean retreat. Singularly he dreamt that the dogs were entombed in some earths near to Norstead House, and could not rest satisfied till he had made a diligent search. After digging some time the cry of a dog was faintly heard, and eventually both animals were extricated alive, after being buried eight days and seven nights, and what is still more extraordinary, apparently but little hurt by their long abstinence.



[ETHEL CLIFTON, IN THE MAY QUEEN'S CHAIR, CARRIED BY GERALD AND VERNON.]

THE SECRET CHAMBER.

CHAPTER I.

He that doth only hear
Of stories dark and terrible, but little
Dreams of their reality, until by
Some strange chance his destiny doth drive him
On the page of a like history. *Old Play.*

It was a stately mansion of the olden time, surrounded with trees coeval with its origin. The Priory had been built before the days of Henry VIII., and among other church property had been confiscated and bestowed upon one of the retainers of the court.

The immense pile presented a rather incongruous appearance; but the lapse of time had imparted an air of sombre grandeur to its dilapidated walls which accorded with the deep shadows cast by the unpruned trees, and the neglected park over which the under-wood was permitted to spring in unchecked luxuriance.

The evening sun penetrated through an open door into a wide hall, panelled with oak, and decorated with faded banners and ancient armour. A grand staircase wound upward from this, at the head of which was a large window filled with painted glass representing a scriptural scene, executed in a style of art unknown in England at that day.

This window had once formed a portion of the decorations of the chapel, and by the command of the new lord of the domain it had been removed to the more modern portion of the building.

Doors opened on either hand into the apartments used by the family; but these comprised but a small portion of the mansion, for the fortunes of the house of Methurn had fallen into decay, and of the wide lands granted to Sir Henry his great-grandson retained but a motley.

The present proprietor, Sir Hugh Methurn, retained only the Priory and a few farms, which brought him in but a tithe of the income once enjoyed by his ancestors.

A large chair, heavily carved, was drawn near the open door, in which sat the bury form of the baronet. He was apparently absorbed in unpleasant thought, for his brow was clouded, and his lips unclosed at intervals to utter imprecations.

Sir Hugh was a heavy, coarse-looking man, verging toward his fiftieth year, and his bloated features betrayed the cause of the gout from which he evidently suffered, for his swollen feet were wrapped in flannel, and a crutch rested against the arm of his chair.

Few who looked upon the wreck of a once stately-looking man would have recognized the court gallant who had figured among the most distinguished beaux of a dissolute period.

When his ruin was nearly consummated, Sir Hugh retired to his paternal acres to recruit his finances and curse the extravagance of which he had been guilty. On looking into his affairs he found that the only resource to avert absolute ruin was a wealthy marriage. The hey-day of his youth was past, but he was still a fine-looking man, with the polished address of a finished courtier with which to veil the inherent coarseness of his nature and the violence of his temper.

Devoured with ennui in his secluded home, he sought such diversion as the society of the neighbourhood afforded, and, in spite of the reputation which had preceded him, he was graciously received by every family in which unmarried daughters were found. Quite a rivalry ensued between the young ladies of the neighbourhood as to which one should bear the title of Lady Methurn, and this doubtful honour was finally bestowed upon an orphan heiress whose fortune was entirely within her own control. Sir Hugh made such inquiries as satisfied him as to the exact amount possessed by Miss Vernon and the manner in which it was invested. She had inherited a magnificent dower of sixty thousand pounds.

Sir Hugh decided that with her beauty and fortune Arabella Vernon was worthy to become his wife, and he so successfully played the part of the tender wooer that within three months from their first meeting she became Lady Methurn.

The union proved wretchedly unhappy. The young bride was spirited and haughty; she was perfectly conscious of what was due to her as the possessor of a large fortune and the wife of an English baronet; but the exacting and imperious temper of her husband led him to treat her as a superior menial in his household rather than as his lawful mistress.

Lady Methurn soon recoiled from her husband with all the strength of a passionate nature. She bitterly resented the treatment she received; but the hard and cold nature with which she had to deal, crushed her into submission, and her proud heart broke beneath the indignities to which she was subjected.

In the first year of their union a son was born, and a few months afterwards Lady Methurn suddenly died, under very mysterious circumstances, and although many wild stories were whispered in the neighbourhood, no one ventured openly to accuse Sir Hugh of having made away with his wife.

Satisfied with his experience of married life, the baronet made no effort to assume such bonds again. The infant was put out to nurse, and Sir Hugh returned to London, to resume his former course of dissipation.

He no longer cared to glitter in court circles; but in gambling-houses, at horse-races, and theatres, he was generally found, and the fortune obtained by his wife soon melted away, as his own had done before.

He thought little of the wrong he was thus inflicting upon his son, for self-indulgence was the first law of nature, and the claims of others were held as nought where they conflicted with his own wishes.

At length his resources were exhausted, his health broken, and premature old age creeping upon him. Nothing remained to him but to return to his paternal acres, and vegetate there for the remainder of his life.

Sir Hugh found his son a wild, untrained lad of ten summers, nominally under the care of the curate of the parish, who eked out his narrow income by receiving a few pupils; but Vernon preferred a ride after the fox-hounds, or a shooting expedition, to the dull lore of books.

His father rather encouraged such preferences; he thought they indicated manliness of character, and his cold heart opened to the boy, as he fancied he recognized in his wild, daring and wayward spirit a strong resemblance to himself.

The gay sallies of the lad amused him, and after Sir Hugh's return to the Priory, Vernon's attendance upon his tutor was less frequent than over. The father and son lived together, and two servants, a groom and housekeeper, formed their whole establishment. Thus Vernon might have grown into a veritable Orson, but in his fourteenth year a diversion was made in his favour by the arrival of a gentle and refined woman to act as mistress of his father's house.

Sir Hugh had an only brother, who lived on a small property inherited from his mother, situated in the north of England. His sudden demise left a widow and only son slenderly provided for; for Henry Methurn had embarked all his means in a speculation, the failure of which broke his heart. In his last moments, he wrote an appeal to his brother to receive his widow and child beneath his roof, and assist her to educate her son for some career in which Gerald could win his bread in the future. Mrs. Methurn had a small annuity secured to her for life, but it was insufficient to enable her to live in comfort with her son.

At the first reception of this news, Sir Hugh was

frate at the burden about to be imposed upon his broken fortunes, but Vernon declared that he should be glad to have a companion of his own age to share his sports; he insisted that their household would be better managed by his aunt than by the old woman who performed the double duties of cook and house-keeper.

Sir Hugh reflected that Mrs. Methurn would not be absolutely dependent upon him, and with less reluctance the letter was written which accorded permission to the widow and her son to shelter themselves beneath his roof.

They came, and the baronet soon found that he would have no cause to regret his liberality. Mrs. Methurn was a pleasing and refined woman, an accomplished nurse, and thoroughly drilled in domestic affairs. She brought with her a servant of her own, and a suit of apartments was prepared for her use. The changes she introduced in their way of living were so gradually and unostentatiously made, that Sir Hugh was scarcely conscious of them till they were accomplished. She nursed him in his attacks of gout so skilfully—born with his outbursts of temper so patiently, that he soon wondered how he had managed to live so long without her womanly ministrations.

Her son was a quiet, retiring lad, in his twelfth year, who submitted to be patronized by Vernon with an air of placid indifference, for the two cousins were as unlike in character as they were in personal appearance. The young heir, with his fair complexion, and profusion of light hair, and flashing blue eyes, seemed the very impersonation of the wild and daring Saxon; his fiery and impatient temper would not brook constraint, and nearly as free as the Arab of the desert he had hitherto been.

Gerald Methurn was in every respect a strong contrast to him. His complexion was dark, his eyes and hair black, like those of his mother, and his features regular as those of a young Antinous. His little and graceful figure was perfectly proportioned, and promised in its full development a rare union of strength and symmetry. Beneath the gentleness of his manner lay impulses as strong, a will as unyielding as that of his more demonstrative cousin; but of this he was as yet himself unconscious. The influence of his mother had thus far moulded his nature, but when the trial of life came, Gerald was to show the true mettle that lay beneath that fair boyish exterior.

In the second year of Mrs. Methurn's residence at the Priory, a strange lady in bad health came to the neighbouring village for the benefit of sea-bathing. She was accompanied by a little girl of very attractive appearance and great sprightliness, who was then in her sixth year. In her visits of benevolence to the cottages of the poor, Mrs. Methurn accidentally encountered the pale invalid. An acquaintance ensued, which soon ripened into a warm friendship. Mrs. Clifton was dying of an incurable disease, and she soon confided to her new friend the fact that at her decease her child would be left without a protector on whom she possessed any claim of affection.

Mrs. Clifton stated that she had eloped with the younger son of a noble family; her husband had been cast off for marrying so far beneath himself, for she was the daughter of his tutor. Her father received them in his humble home, and at his death bequeathed her the savings of life, which afforded her the narrow income of eighty pounds a year. On this the young couple managed to live contentedly, for they were devoted to each other, until Mr. Clifton was drowned in a yachting expedition.

The sudden and violent shock produced the heart disease of which she was dying, and what was to be the fate of her desolate orphan after her decease she could not think without a shudder. To the suggestion of Mrs. Methurn that her father's family would probably receive the little Ethel, she replied that her husband's family had treated her with such indignity that she could not think of throwing her daughter on their protection. She sighed bitterly as she added:

"My Ethel is a little waif who will be thrown on the wide world after I am gone. Dear friend, if I could only confide to you—once certain that your gentle, womanly heart would watch over hers should die happy."

"If I were in my own house," replied Mrs. Methurn, "I would not hesitate to assume the charge; but Sir Hugh is peculiar, and I am afraid that he would scarcely consent to receive the child at the Priory." "She will not be a dependant," said the pale mother. "My small means are securely invested, and she will have enough to keep her above want. I must lose no time in seeking an asylum for her, for I feel that my time on earth is brief."

This conversation took place on the evening of a lovely summer day, and the friends parted, little dreaming that it was for the last time.

At an early hour on the following day, a messenger came in haste to the Priory, to say that Mrs. Clifton

was found dead in her bed that morning, and the child was inconsolable for the loss she had sustained. Mrs. Methurn went at once to the village, and the desolate state of the little creature thus left alone in the world touched her deeply. She saw that arrangements for a respectable funeral were made, and returned to the Priory, bringing with her the young orphan; for she justly reasoned that Sir Hugh would not object to her presence for a few days.

Coarse and ill-tempered as the baronet was, he was not quite an ogre, and the delicate beauty of the child, the deep and quiet sorrow, of a creature so young, touched even his hard heart, and he submitted to her presence without making the disagreeable comments her new protectress had feared.

Mrs. Clifton was consigned to the grave, and her effects examined, to discover to whom letters should be addressed with reference to the position of Ethel. From these it was ascertained that Baron Clifton, of Clifton, was her grandfather, and to him a notification of the sudden death was sent, together with a statement of where Ethel was to be found.

In due time a reply came, in which the baron formally renounced all interest in the little girl, and refused to receive her. He stated, that on application to his name of business, fifty pounds a year would be paid for the support of the child, and requested her present protectors to find some one who would take charge of her for that sum. Beyond that, he neither could nor would interest himself in her welfare: her father had been disowned for the plebeian alliance he had made, and his daughter had no claim on him beyond being provided with the bare means of living.

Several weeks had elapsed since Ethel was received at the Priory, and in that time the natural playfulness and vivacity of her temper began to revive. She betrayed no fear of Sir Hugh, and the novelty of being caressed by a lovely little fairy, and prattled to with the sweet ingenuousness of her years became attractive to him. The two boys were charmed with her precocious intelligence, and when the fiat of her grandfather came, it was soon understood that Ethel was to remain in the asylum in which fate had cast her.

The sum which was annually paid over to Sir Hugh's order enabled him to obtain many indulgences which he could not hitherto afford, and Ethel soon became an important member of the little family. Vernon teased, petted and tyrannized over her by turns, and his more gentle cousin undertook the part of instructor to her in such branches of education as his mother did not superintend. Ethel proved a docile and apt pupil, and her young preceptor took extreme pride in her progress.

Mrs. Methurn became tenderly attached to her protégée, and she had never regretted the adoption of this little waif. Three years had passed away since the death of Mrs. Clifton, and Ethel was now in her tenth year, Gerald Methurn sixteen, and the young heir eighteen years of age. Such was the state of affairs at the Priory at the opening of our story.

CHAPTER II.

Sir Hugh uttered several impatient growls, and then burst forth:

"Humph! am I to sit here by myself the whole evening? What has become of those young monkeys, I wonder? What can have become of Ethel, that she does not come to tell me how the May day has passed off. Ah! times have changed with me since I was the gayest galliard in such a scene. Dancing on the light fantastic toe wouldn't be so pleasant with these old gouty feet. Umph! why can't nature gently steal away the breath that is only drawn in pain? What is the use of an old hulk like mine continuing to cumber the ground? I'm tired of life; it's a disgusting performance, this rattling through the seven ages allotted to man. I've almost come to the lean and-clipped pantaloon; though with me the lean portion will never come to pass; I know how to keep up the supplies too well for that," and he stretched forth his hand toward a decanter that stood on the table near him. After holding it up to the light, and admirably surveying the deep ruby tint of the wine, he poured out a goblet nearly full, and quaffed it with the true gusto of a connoisseur.

"The doctor said a thin-blooded wouldn't hurt me. His idea of a thin-blooded and mine probably differ; but I prefer my measure. Fine wine—mild wine; but Vernon shows too much fondness for it of late. I must not encourage the lad in such habits, for they have brought me to what I am. So I'll just finish the bottle before he returns. I've already exceeded bounds, and a drop more won't add much to the mischief that's already done. Why should wine be so injurious to a man, I wonder? I don't believe it is; my gout is constitutional; I got it from my ancestors, with many other things that were better worth having, which have somehow slipped away from me, while

this inheritance hangs on, and cripples me half the time."

While he thus muttered, Sir Hugh again applied to his bottle, and poured forth the last drop, which was drained at a draught.

At that moment the sound of approaching music was heard, which was soon blended with the confused murmur of voices; and peering through the open door, he saw a joyous group approaching the house. The three most prominent figures were very familiar to him, and he said:

"Hail! coming at last, with that pack of grinning fools at their heels! I wonder why they couldn't have finished their revels without disturbing me with all this noise and clamour?"

The door on his left hand opened, and a serene-looking woman, wearing a black robe and plain white collar, approached him. Mrs. Methurn was yet youthful-looking, and the black hair that was combed back from her broad, smooth brow was threaded by a line of silver. The eyes were large, dark, and singularly soft in their expression; and the quiet grace of her movements revealed the refined and gentle spirit from which they emanated. She spoke in a soft, clear voice:

"Our revellers are returning; they seem in great spirits, but I am afraid it was ill-judged to bring their companions back with them. Let me entreat, Sir Hugh, that you will not damp their mirth by too severe a reprimand."

"Humph! and much they'd mind it, if I did. I've been left by myself half the day, and now they are coming back with this hullabaloo to deafen me and fill me with spleen, over the mad antics in which I can no longer join. Yes, times are changed, sadly changed, with me."

The soft eyes compassionately regarded him. "I would have borne you company, if I had no other reason to suppose you preferred being alone. When I came you requested me to leave you to your own thoughts."

"Ordered you, you should say—yes, I am a brute—I know I am; but my bad temper is always getting the better of me. This morning I was in one of my savage moods, but now I feel more human. The wine the doctor permitted me to take has brightened me up a little. With such titbits as this I feel as if there is still something worth living for."

The lady glanced toward the empty bottle, and said, in a tone of surprise:

"You surely have not ventured to drink a whole bottle, Sir Hugh?"

"Zounds, madam, what is that trifle to one like me? A mere drop—a mere nothing. Would you have me such a milkop as to leave the beaker undrained! Yes, I drank it all, and I think I should like more."

"But the doctor said—"

A volley of oaths burst from the choleric old man, and he exclaimed:

"The doctor and his drugs may go to the dogs. I've found out that they are worth nothing. Why don't he set me on my feet if he has any skill? Here I've been nearly helpless for three weeks, and he has done nothing to help me, until he had sense enough to say I might take a taste of this life-elixir."

Mrs. Methurn said nothing more, but she looked apprehensively upon his flushed features, and thought with silent dread upon another seizure as dangerous as the one from which he was just recovering; for Sir Hugh was the most intractable of patients, and the most unmanageable of convalescents.

In the meantime, the May-day group approached the house, the musicians playing a lively air, with which the voices of the young people mingled in a roundelay suited to the occasion. They seemed to have improvised a festival for themselves at the close of the one in which they had just participated; for the rustic queen of the day walked in the rear, and in front was borne a wicker chair, over which a canopy, adorned with flowers, was erected.

Beneath this was seated a child of slender proportions, her white robe wreathed with flowers, and her long, amber locks flowing beneath a crown of the same. Her complexion was delicately fair, with eyes of a deep violet blue, with long, dark lashes curling upward. There was an expression of extreme refinement in her charming face, and in her small hand she bore a sceptre adorned with roses.

When her two bearers, Vernon and Gerald, placed her chair in front of the door, she sprang lightly from it, and bounding toward Sir Hugh, knelt before him, and placed her crown and sceptre at his feet, as she said:

"The May Queen deposes me to offer her homage to the lord of the manor, and pray from him the liberty to tread a measure in the ancient hall of his fathers."

"Ho! ladybird, that speech smacks of my scholarly nephew, for you would never have made it of yourself. What! Dance in this old place? We've not trod a measure here since my lady died, but that is

now many a year ago. My dancing days are over, but Vernon no doubt thinks his day has come. Well, well, young folks, since you're all come with the hope of having a reel, I'll not be rude enough to balk you. Come in, place yourselves, and let me see how you can perform."

"Thank you, dear, good Sir Hugh! I knew you would consent," exclaimed the little girl, starting up and clapping her hands. "Now, Gerald, let us take our places."

Vernon stepped forward, and with a flashing glance, said:

"To the air belongs the hand of the Fairy Queen. Come, Ethel, let me lead you to the head of the reel."

She drew back, and with an air of childish command, said:

"I am but the queen's deputy; there stands the one to whom your courtesy is due," making a gesture towards a young girl of sixteen, who stood blushing and expectant of this honour.

Vernon imperiously replied:

"Gerald may do the honours there. You are to dance with me; I choose it to be so, and that is enough."

He seized her hand and drew her toward the further end of the hall, saying to his cousin as he passed him:

"Take out the rustic queen, Gerald, I prefer her deputy."

A faint flush crossed the olive cheek of the youth, but he was too much accustomed to the overbearing spirit of his cousin to be surprised at the command. He bowed courteously and approached the young girl, who looked resentfully after the young heir and his smiling companion. But her brow cleared, and the smile returned to her lips as she listened to the request of Gerald to become his partner. She gave him her hand and, with an arch expression, said:

"If Mr. Vernon had only known what a gipsy told me yesterday afternoon, he would never have put this slight upon me."

"So—you have dealings with gipsies, Miss Kate Conway. What would your father say to that, I wonder?"

"He'd scold me and keep me from walking abroad, I suppose; but don't you want to hear what she said, for it concerns you?"

"Indeed I pray let me hear it then."

"The queen of the tribe told me that the one with whom I should first dance on this evening would be crowned with good fortune."

Gerald laughed gayly.

"Of course—since I have the honour to dance with you—that was all the prophet meant."

"Oh, no—by no means—for she went on to say that after many trials and difficulties you would win all you desire."

"It will be brave news for my mother that her darling boy is to become a favourite of fortune; but, unluckily, gipsies' prophecies rarely meet with fulfilment. I am afraid that in this instance there is little prospect of their being realized."

"But I tell you this was the queen of the tribe—an old woman, known far and wide for her skill in fortune-telling; and I am glad, Master Gerald, that you are the person she referred to, for you are good as well as brave. I have not forgotten the time you dragged my brother from the fireplace at the risk of your own life."

Gerald blushed slightly at this praise. He said:

"I only acted from an impulse of humanity. I could not see a lad drown when I knew how to swim; and my own life was not in the slightest danger, I assure you."

"Others thought differently, sir. But the music strikes up, and it is time for us to gain our places."

Fifteen couples stood up in a country dance, at the head of which were the two cousins with their partners. Ethel fitted through the mazes of the reel with the light and airy grace which distinguished her, and Sir Hugh watched her with an emotion almost of pleasure. He contrasted her with the rosy and rustic beauties from the village, and said to Mrs. Methurn:

"See how our ladybird puts all the rest to shame. She might some day make a figure at court; if that old curmudgeon of a grandfather would do his duty by her."

"Then we should lose our darling," said the lady, with a pensive smile. "Neither should I be willing to know that my pure-hearted child was exposed to the temptations of a court."

"Zounds, madam, you talk like a simpleton! Life away from court is but vegetating. I have sinned myself in royal favour, and I know what it is worth. If my acres had not so dreadfully dwindled away, I would take our young people to London and see what would come of it."

"I can tell you beforehand, Sir Hugh. Ruin would be the result. The royal favour did not reimburse you, or anything like it, for your losses. We had better content ourselves in the station Providence has assigned us, and teach our young people not to aspire beyond it."

"Stuff! for a sensible woman, you do talk more foolishly than any one I ever heard. Aspire! it is our right to do so; it is in our blood, and if Vernon was willing to sit down on this ruined estate, and seek for no means of rising in the future, I should despise him. No; he must build up a great future; risk everything to restore the ancient prestige of his family. He is handsome, daring, and ambitious, and it is a bitter thought to me that I can do so little for him."

Mrs. Methurn did not remind him that to his own prodigality he owed his present disability to aid his son.

She only replied:

"He who is born to a great destiny will achieve it in spite of difficulties. Vernon possesses all the qualities of which you speak, and I trust he will make a good use of them. As to my own boy, if he becomes a noble and true man, with industry to win his way to a competency, I shall be satisfied. I have endeavoured to give him good principles, and correct views of his responsibility as a human creature—the rest I am content to leave to a higher power."

"Oh, I dare say," sneered the irritable baronet; "but I've never seen that any power helped those who don't try to help themselves. Gerald is a very good lad, and it is well enough for him to content himself in obscurity. He is not the representative of the family, and my son is; you see there is a wide difference."

The fond mother glanced toward the two youths, and thought there was indeed a wide difference, but her maternal partiality induced her to believe that the comparison was entirely in favour of her own son. The manly self-dependence of Gerald, combined with quiet simplicity of character, rose in strong contrast with the reckless will and fiery temper of the heir, who already showed the traits of his father in a striking manner. Mrs. Methurn often marvelled what Vernon's future was to be, and feared that the restraints of principle would be slightly regarded in the pursuit of any course that promised pleasure or profit to himself.

But the cessation of the dance recalled her to the necessity of providing refreshments for their unexpected guests, and at her command, foaming tumblers of ale were brought in, with such edibles as the house afforded.

While sipping hers, the May Queen addressed Vernon with a slight toss of her pretty head:

"You would not dance with me, Mr. Vernon but you gained nothing by your refusal, let me tell you. Ask your cousin what I have told him."

"I am sure I do not know what I have lost," replied the young man, indifferently. "I owed you a return, for refusing to walk with me yesterday."

"My father forbade my doing so, and he will not like my coming here this afternoon, for he says you have been trying to turn my head lately by your flatteries."

"Well, it's a very pretty head, and what can your father expect but that a gay young man will tell you so? But what have I lost, Kate? I am anxious to find out."

"Only the benefit of a prediction; that is all."

"Really! I am more curious than ever; pray enlighten me."

The girl then related what she had already told Gerald, and the young man glanced toward his cousin with an air of chagrin; but he laughed and said:

"I fancy I can accomplish more for myself than the prophecies of the gipsy can bring about. But where did you find her? I did not know there was an encampment in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Tarply had better begin to look after her poultry if they are herabouts."

"I accidentally came on them as I was walking last evening, and the queen told my fortune."

"So you did walk after all? Tell me where they are to be found, for I have a desire to see this famous sorceress."

"They are in a hollow, behind the beechwood, about a mile below the Priory."

"I often shoot in that direction, and I shall seek them out to-morrow, and probably warn them off. They are a set of pestilent vagrants, and should not be permitted to remain on any gentleman's property." Vernon answered away, and the fair Kate consoled herself for his neglect by flirting with a young yeoman, who had long been in love with her.

Kate Conway was the daughter of a rich farmer, and as her father's income was quite equal to that of Sir Hugh, she had ambitiously aspired to become the future Lady Methurn. The incidents of the day, however, had taught her that the attentions and flatteries of the young heir meant nothing, and she wisely turned to one in her own sphere for consolation.

As the sun was setting, the party broke up, and the family, in a comparatively happy state, assembled to-

gether to dine in a small apartment adjoining the great banquetting-hall, which, in the palmy days of the Methurns, had resounded with mirth and wassail. Now, it was desolate in its faded grandeur; for Sir Hugh's decayed fortunes no longer permitted him to entertain his neighbours in the roystering style of the day, and his pride was too great to permit him to receive them with less splendour than had been the ancient custom of his house.

A deeply embayed window opened from this smaller apartment upon the neglected park, and the soft spring air fluttered through the shrubbery that grew near it. Ethel sat in such a position as to have a view of an opening in the woodland beyond, and she suddenly uttered an exclamation, and said:

"What a strange-looking woman! and she is coming here, I declare."

Vernon rose and approached the window.

"It is one of the gipsy clan of which Kate Conway spoke. What do you say, Ethel, to having your fortune told?"

"Oh, I had rather not, I am sure, I am afraid she might tell me something dreadful!"

"There's no danger of that. She is too wise to tell what she thinks will not please. It will be some fun, however, to hear what she pretends to know of the future. Shall we let her in, father?"

Sir Hugh was in a better humour than usual, and after glancing toward the woman who was approaching with rapid strides towards the Priory, he said:

"If you choose; but I think it is folly to meddle with such mummery. What is to come, will come without any intervention from such a witch as that."

The woman was now sufficiently near to be distinctly seen, and the uncomplimentary epithet applied to her seemed well deserved. She was very tall and strongly built, and her step was as free and firm as that of a woman of twenty, though her brown features were hideously wrinkled, and her black hair thickly streaked with grey, hung loosely over her shoulders beneath a crimson scarf which was wound about her head in the shape of a turban. A faded gown fell to her feet, over which was thrown a red cloak much the worse for wear.

The black eyes of this sinister apparition flashed upon the young party which had gathered in front of the window, and her keen glance wandered alternately from face to face, as if seeking to read the peculiarities of those she was about to address.

"A fair good evening to you, my young friends," she said, in a loud, clear voice. "A pretty trio for Fate to dispose of. Cross my hand with silver, young sir," addressing Vernon; "and let me tell you what Fortune has in store for you."

"If I cross it with gold, will not my fortune be better worth hearing?" he mockingly asked. "Tell me truly, good dame; for I would give much to purchase even the promise of a brilliant future."

The woman fixedly regarded him as she replied:

"The oracle is not to be bribed to utter that which is not to be. Let me see the lines in your hand, and for a silver coin I will tell you all I may see there."

Vernon drew a shilling from his pocket and placed it on her outstretched palm; then, extending his own hand, he laughingly said:

"Tell me the good, but leave the bad unspeakable. I do not wish to be disenchanted with life before I have fairly commenced it."

The gipsy glanced at the lines within the well-shaped hand she held, and suddenly dropping it, she tendered him back the money he had given her.

"Your fate is so mingled with good and evil that I cannot attempt to tell one without the other. Take back your coin, since you will not hear all."

Vernon flushed deeply, and he haughtily said:

"But it is my will that you speak only what I wish to know!"

The woman regarded him with an expression as haughty as his own, and she sternly said:

"I know something of the scriptures, and it is there said that the good grain was choked by the tares that sprang up around it. Such will be your case, young sir. Unbridled, reckless passions, will ever bring forth the same fruits. Since you will have what I read in the lines traced upon your palm, I will speak the whole. You will conspire against the Government, meet with defeat, imprisonment, ending with something worse. There will be gleams of good fortune, which will but serve to delude you, and at noonday your life will be —"

She paused, for Vernon had raised his hand threateningly, and he peremptorily spoke:

"Enough; I have no faith in your words, and in time I shall prove them false. Now read the future of this child," and he drew Ethel forward, in spite of her efforts to remain unnoticed.

The harshness passed from the brow of the woman as her eyes fell upon the fair face of the child, and she softly said:

"A dainty queen she will be, and what is better, a lovely and beloved woman. Nay, little one, lay your tender hand in my hand, brown one, and do not tremble so; for such as you the Fates have good in store."

Thus reassured, Ethel suffered the gipsy to peer into the rosy little palm, which she extended with much internal perturbation; but she deprecatingly said:

"If you see anything very bad, pray don't tell me of it."

"Poor little dove! I see that a hawk will swoop down and attempt to bear you away; but a young eagle will drive him off, and place you in his nest in safety. After trouble comes joy; upon darkness breaks the light, and happy and fortunate will be he who will claim you as his own."

"Very lucid, upon my word!" sneered Verner, as the woman dropped Ethel's hand. "Quite as easy to interpret as the oracles of the Delphian sisterhood; and now for my cousin. He is a pattern youth, so I am anxious to know what awaits him in the future."

The seer earnestly regarded the noble face of Gerald, and said:

"I read truth and candour on your broad brow, courage and hope in the earnest eyes, and success in the firm lips. His line of life also says that honour and good fortune shall crown him in the days that are to come."

Verner started at the repetition of the prophecy which Kate Conway had so lately repeated, and a glance of passionate malignity fell upon his cousin as he said:

"So, all the good is reserved for Gerald and Ethel, and the vials of wrath are only to be poured out on me. What have I done to deserve such a fate at your hands, I pray?"

"Nothing as yet. The acts which will bear such bitter fruits lie veiled in the future. I might warn you to avoid them, but what is writ is writ, and as easily could I arrest the thunder's roll as stay you in the career you will surely run. He who grudges to the wandering gipsy the shelter of his woodlands, the game that wanders wild in the fern, and the water from the bubbling spring, need hope for little good from the unseen spirits of the air, who rule and shape our destinies."

"Ho, ho! then you have heard my threat to drive you from your covert, and thus my evil fortune is accounted for. Accept the warning you seem already to have received, for I shall certainly be as good as my word. If I find you on my father's grounds to-morrow, I will set my dogs upon you."

The woman regarded him defiantly, as she significantly said:

"Perhaps Sir Hugh Methurn will have a word to say to that. I came hither to speak with him, and I wish to see him alone."

Sir Hugh and Mrs. Methurn were still at the table, and the group of young people around the window had hitherto concealed the visitor from them. Verner stepped aside and called out to his father.

"Here's a queen, sir, who demands a private interview with you, to petition for the right of herself and her vagabond companions to forage on your domain. What do you say to it, sir?"

Gerald and Ethel also drew away from the window, and the striking figure of the gipsy stood as if framed in the open space, with a background of foliage through which the crimson clouds that still lingered on the horizon, cast their radiant glow.

Sir Hugh regarded her with a stare of astonishment, and roughly said:

"Let the hag go her ways, I have nothing to say to her."

The gipsy raised her finger warningly:

"But I have much to say to you, Methurn. Remember the Secret Chamber!"

The baronet fell back upon his seat, and the purple flush upon his features faded to a livid hue as he listened to her mysterious words. The woman continued to gaze steadily, almost fiercely upon him, and after a moment of painful indecision he waved his hand and said:

"Away, all of you. Let the woman enter: I must speak with her in private."

In that house Sir Hugh's mandates were always obeyed without question, and even Verner dared not linger, much as his curiosity was excited.

In a few moments the baronet was left alone in the room, and at a sign from him his strange visitor stepped over the low sill of the window and approached his chair. He gazed upon her wrinkled face with an expression of repulsion which she was quick to read and interpret, and with an accent of scornful bitterness, she said:

"Once, Hugh Methurn, your eyes bore a different expression when I approached you. But then I was young and gay; now I am old and haggard. Look at my wrinkled face, at my whitened hair, and see if in them you can behold a trace of the wild beauty that

once fascinated you; and I, in my turn, can gaze upon your bloated form, your swollen features, and contrast your present self with the gay galliard who came among my tribe, and spent months in wandering with us for the sake of the Gipsy Queen, whose only power has departed from her—that of youth and beauty."

"Yes," faltered Sir Hugh, "we are both sadly changed since those days. But what can have brought you here, Minchen, and why did you make so dangerous an allusion as that you uttered but now?"

"Dangerous? Why should it be so? No one understood it but you and I. Oh! those were merry days when I shut up my rival, and gloated over her misery, while you took her gold and squandered it. I tortured her—I taunted her with her helpless position. She had a proud heart, and between us we broke it at last. Ha, Sir Hugh, do you ever enter that chamber, now?"

"Why should I?" he faltered. "I have no business there, and the spring has rusted from long disuse. I have not trod the way for fifteen years, and now it is probably impossible to find it."

"Then I know more of your house than you do yourself; the spring is not rusted, and the passage is open, for I have passed through it to-day."

"You! what took you there, and why have you come to me now?—I trusted that you and I had met for the last time."

"Oh, I dare say. Since you have become a respectable family man, you would be glad to forget the black spot that is upon your escutcheon; but it will spread, Hugh Methurn, it will spread, and her son will do nothing to remove the stain. The ban is upon you, Sir Hugh, and the son in whom all your pride is centred, will yet bring woe to your heart. He will bitterly avenge the wrongs of his mother, though it will be through his own ruin that the vengeance will be accomplished."

"Woman! how dare you speak thus? Is it not enough that I surrendered to you one victim to appease your jealous wrath, that you must come hither to denounce evil against her son? I will not bear it—no, I will not."

"How can you help yourself, Sir Hugh? I hold your life in my hands—your honour is at my mercy—I speak what Fate has ordained. The son of Belle Vernoer shall no more reign in the halls of Methurn than my son shall claim the inheritance which is his by right of seniority. Both shall make way for a better man. The spirit of prophecy that has descended to me through many generations, has foreshadowed the fate of this house. You refuse to believe me, but that matters not—the destiny which is ordained must fulfil itself."

"No!" he passionately said: "I will not believe in your evil predictions. You hate the boy. You have hated him from the hour of his birth, and your malignity leads you to foretell ruin to him. What is your purpose in coming here now? Speak, and if I can aid you in any way, I will, on the condition that you will leave me for ever. Your presence stifles me."

"Ha! ha! it brings back the memory of your crime. You fear that retribution is coming. But not from my hand, Hugh Methurn—not from me. My boy has your eyes, when they beamed with the light of love; your voice, when it spoke only to deceive, and I would not have him know that doom fell upon his false father through my means. No—you are safe so far as I am concerned, and no other human creature knows of the dark deed we planned and executed together."

"Then I again ask you what has brought you hither?"

She replied with a bitter smile:

"To see my old love—to talk with him, to show him the wreck of the beauty he once valued so highly. To look upon him, and wonder how I could ever so madly have loved him."

"That is accomplished, so leave me!" suddenly replied Sir Hugh. "If you are disenchanted, I am doubly so. In the wrinkled hag you have become, I see few traces of the brilliant Minchen, who turned the evil in my nature to her own purposes. You demanded the sacrifice of my wife, and I, prompted equally by love and avarice, consented. I grasped the fortune I coveted, and cast it to the winds. I now believe that you urged me to it in the hope that my son would be left penniless; but I am not quite ruined. I have saved a few of my hereditary acres, and the old house will descend to the lawful representative of my family."

"And that other son, the eldest born, Sir Hugh, what shall be his patrimony? The heart of the father should be as tender to one child as to another."

"I would long since have removed Melchior from you, and provided for him in the best manner my limited means would have enabled me to do, but you spurned all my offers. You have reared him to follow your own wild life, and I have ceased to take an in-

terest in him. The boy never loved me, then why should I trouble myself about him?"

"True, Sir Hugh, but you know the cause. The blow dealt in anger has not ceased to affect him yet; but he has sense enough to understand and bitterly resent the treatment his mother has received at your hands. He knows that when I ceased to be attractive to you, I was cast off with a hardness of heart which few can emulate. You taunt me with my changed appearance, but what ploughed those wrinkles on my face? what blanched my hair to silver and turned my heart to gall, but your desertion! Oh, Sir Hugh Methurn, we have a brave score to settle yet, and it is not my purpose to abate one jot or tittle of the reckoning!"

The naturally irritable temper of the baronet was aroused to fury by this threat. There was in his heart no lingering feeling of tenderness for the speaker, and he angrily replied:

"Exact it if you will; but I warn you that the ruin that crushes me shall also fall on you. You want money, I suppose. I am poor enough, but I can give you a small sum, if you will promise never to trouble me again, nor to thrust upon me the claims of your son."

He drew forth a worn pocket-book, and took from it several gold pieces, which he offered to her with an expression of reluctance, which the woman fathomed; but she took the coins, and dropping them into a faded pouch that hung at her side, said:

"Melchior has never troubled you, nor will he ever do so. He has the gipsy's heart, and he loves the wild life of the woods too well to accept even your ruined house, if the gift were coupled with the condition that he should dwell within it. I only ask leave to stay for a season upon your lands, without being harried by the hounds, as your wife's son has threatened us."

"You have it," Verner spoke fully; he will obey my command to leave you in peace."

"Be sure that you exact obedience, Sir Hugh, or it will be worse for you," was the threatening response, as the woman retreated through the window.

She again turned, and stood in the shadow of the casement; waving her hand toward him, with an expression of scornful sarcasm on her dark features, she said:

"The hag leaves you to such peace as you may find, Hugh Methurn. If you have planted thorns in her heart, she has done the same by you; so we are quits on that score. Of the love that is turned to gall, beware! it can be more cruel, more implacable than even hereditary hatred."

Before he could reply, she disappeared through the shrubbery, and Sir Hugh gave vent to his pent-up wrath by a volley of execrations, which were unheard by her on whom they were intended to fall.

Then he thought with dread of the power this woman possessed over him; of her fierce temper, her undisguised hatred toward the son in whom all his hopes were centred, and he shuddered at the possibilities of the future. The allusion to the secret chamber, and what had occurred there, was full of horror to him, and he would have given much to be able to visit it once more, and ascertain the condition in which it now was; but his crippled limbs forbade such an attempt, and he sat till twilight deepened into night, recalling that long-buried past, with its dreary array of heartlessness and crime.

(To be continued)

DISCOVERIES AT POMPEII.—The *Chronique des Arts* states that among the articles recently discovered at Pompeii is a small head of Juno in silver, of exquisite workmanship; also the body in silver, but broken; a bridle-bit in bronze; a lamp in the same metal complete, with cover, suspending chain, an extinguisher; a patera; a large and handsome vase, with the handles terminated by winged genii holding a cornucopia; other small vases in bronze; and a seal in that metal bearing the name of the master of the house in which the articles were found—Lucio Cornelio Diadumeno.

WEATHER FORECASTS.—In a French almanack for 1774 are the following weather forecasts: "The coldest winters are those which begin about the Epiphany," the 6th of January. The Feast of St. Peter's Chair is on the 18th, and the old almanack says: "On the chair of the good St. Peter the winter quits us or grows colder." The 17th of January is the Feast of St. Anthony. "The days when St. Anthony comes are longer by a monk's dinner," that is, the time spent by the monk in eating it. St. Vincent is commemorated on the 22nd, and the almanack says: "Take care of St. Vincent, for if on his day you see the sun clear and fine, we shall have more wine than water." This, I suspect, is the reason why wine-growers have taken St. Vincent for their patron saint. "The conversion of St. Paul is celebrated on the 25th, and we are told in rude dog-

grel: "When St. Paul's day is fine we may look out for a good year. If it be windy we shall have war. If it snow or rain we shall have dearth everywhere; and if the atmosphere be thick and foggy, it denotes great mortality."

SELF-MADE;

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By Mrs. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

HANNAH'S HAPPY PROGNOSTICS.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense and with cheek all bloom,
Leaching the night away with playful scorn,
Rejoicing as if earth contained no tomb,
And glowing into day.

ISHMAEL had also keenly felt parting with Beatrice. But accustomed to self-government, he did not permit his feelings to overcome him. And, indeed, his mind was too well balanced to be much disturbed by what he believed would be but a short separation from his betrothed.

He rode away from the Middletons gaily that pleasant winter morning, through the leafless woods, until he came to those cross roads which marked the direction he should turn to visit some old friends.

Here he paused, for here it was necessary, finally to decide a question that he had been debating with himself for the last two days.

And that was whether or not he should take the time to go to see Hannah and Reuben and bid them good-bye, before proceeding on his long journey.

To go to Woodside, he must take the road through Baymouth, which would carry him some miles out of his direct road and consume several hours of that time, of which every moment was now so precious.

But to leave the country without saying farewell to the friends of his infancy, was repugnant to every good feeling of his heart.

He did not hesitate long.

He turned his horse's head towards Baymouth, and put him into a gallop. The horse was fresh, and Ishmael thought he would ride fast until he got to Woodside, and then let the horse rest, while he talked to Hannah.

He rode through Baymouth without drawing rein; only giving a rapid glance of recognition as he passed the broad show window of Hamlin's bookstore, which used to be the wonder and delight of his destitute boyhood.

It was still early in the morning when he reached Woodside and rode up to the cottage gate.

How bright and cheerful the cottage looked that splendid winter morning!

Ishmael dismounted, tied his horse, and entered the little gate.

Hannah was standing on the step of the porch holding a tin pan of chicken food in her hands, and feeding two pet bantams that she kept separate from the Shanghai, which beat them cruelly whenever they got a chance.

On seeing Ishmael she dropped her pan and made a dash at him, exclaiming:

"Why, Ishmael! Good fathers alive! is this you? And where did you drop from?"

"From my saddle, at your gate, last, Aunt Hannah," said Ishmael, smiling, as he folded her in his embrace.

"But I'm so glad to see you, Ishmael! And so surprised! Come in, my dear, dear boy."

"I am delighted to see you looking so hearty, aunt! I declare you are growing quite stout," said Ishmael, affectionately surveying his relative.

"Women are apt to, at my age, Ishmael! But come in, my dear boy; come in!"

When they entered the cottage, she drew Reuben's comfortable arm-chair up to the fire; and when Ishmael had seated himself, she said:

"And, now! first of all: have you had your breakfast?"

"Hours ago, thank you!"

"Yes; a road-side tavern breakfast! I know what that is!"

"Sit down and give yourself no trouble. I breakfasted famously at the Beacon."

"Oh!" exclaimed Hannah with a little jealous twinge, "you've been there, have you? That accounts for everything. Well, I suppose it's natural. But when is that affair to come off, Ishmael?"

"If you mean my marriage with Miss Middleton, it will not take place until next autumn, as I believe I have already informed you."

"But haven't you been down there to coax the old man to shorten the time?"

"No, but with a very different purpose."

"A different purpose? What was it? But law!

here I am keeping you talking, in your great coat! Take it off at once, Ishmael, and be comfortable. And I will make Sam light a fire, and carry some hot water into your room."

"No, do not, please! Believe me, it is unnecessary, and indeed quite useless! I have but half-an-hour to stay with you!"

"But half-an-hour to stay with me! Do you mean to insult me, Ishmael Worth?" demanded Hannah, wrathfully.

"Certainly not, dear aunt Hannah," laughed Ishmael; "but I am going to leave the country, and so—"

"Going to—what?"

"I am going to leave the country quite suddenly, and that is the reason—"

"Ishmael Worth! have you robbed a bank or killed a man, that you are going to run away from Tanglewood?" exclaimed Hannah, indignantly.

"Neither," laughed Ishmael, "I go with Judge Merlin, on professional business—"

"Is that old man going to travel at his age?"

"He goes on very important business."

"Very important fiddle-stick's end! The great old baby is pining after his daughter! And he's just made up this excuse of business because he is ashamed to let people know the real reason—as well he may be! But why he should drag you along with him is more than I can tell."

"He thinks I can be of service to him, and I shall try."

"You'll try to ruin yourself, that's what you'll do."

"Aunt Hannah, I have but a few minutes left. If you will permit me, I will just give my horse some water and go."

The front door opened, and Reuben Gray entered, leading the two children.

"Reuben, where's your eyes? Don't you see who is in the room? Here's Ishmael!" exclaimed Hannah, irately.

"Ishmael! Why so he is! Why, Lord bless you, boy, I'm so glad!" exclaimed Reuben, with his honest face all in a glow of delight as he shook his guest's hands.

And at the same time the children let go their father's hand and stood before the young man, waiting eagerly to be noticed.

"Yes, you'd better look at him. Look at him your fill now. You'll never see him again," groaned Hannah.

"Never see who again? What are you talking about, Hannah, my dear?"

"Ishmael! He's come to bid a last good-bye to us all. He's a going to leave his native country. He's a going to Scotland."

"Ishmael going to Scotland!" exclaimed Reuben, gazing in surprise on his young guest.

"Yes, Uncle Reuben, I am going with Judge Merlin on business."

"Well, to be sure, that is a surprise. I knowed the judge was a going to see his darter; but I had no idea that you was a going 'long of him," said Reuben.

"When do you go? that is what I want to know," cried Hannah sharply.

"We sail on Wednesday; and that is the reason, Aunt Hannah, why I am so hurried! You see I must reach London to-night so as to finish up my business there."

"What? you going in one of them steamers? Oh, law!"

"What is the matter?"

"I know the steamer'll burst its boiler, or catch a-fire, or sink, or something, I know it!"

"Lord, Hannah! don't dishearten people that-a-way! Why should the steamer do anything of the kind?" said Reuben, with a doubtful and troubled air.

"Because they are always and for everlasting a doing of such things."

"Goodness, gracious, me alive, Hannah! You turn my very blood to water. Ishmael, don't you go."

"Nonsense, Uncle Reuben. You know Aunt Hannah, she cannot help looking on the darkest side. When I was a boy, she was always prophesying I'd be hung, you know. Positively, sometimes she made me fear I might be," said Ishmael, smiling, and turning an affectionate glance upon his creaking relative.

"Yes, it's all very well for you to talk that way, Ishmael Worth. But I know one thing. I know I never heard of any sort of ship going safe into port more than two or three times in the whole course of my life. And I have heard of many and many a shipwreck," said Hannah, nodding her head, with the air of one who had just uttered a "knock-down" argument.

"Why, of course, Aunt Hannah. Because, in your remote country neighbourhood, you always hear of the wreck that happens once in a year, or in two years; but you never hear of the thousands upon

thousands of ships that are always making safe voyages!"

"Oh, Ishmael, hush! It won't do. I'm not convinced. I don't expect ever to see you alive again!"

"Law, Hannah, my dear, don't be so disbelieving. Really, now, you discourage one."

"Hold your tongue, Reuben. I say it and I stand to it, that steamer will either burst her boiler, or catch fire, or sink, or something; and we shall never see our boy again!"

Here Little Molly, who had been attentively listening to the conversation, and, like poor Desdemona, understood "a horror in the words," if not the words, opened her mouth and set up a howl, that was immediately seconded by her brother.

It became necessary to soothe and quiet these youngsters, and Reuben lifted them both to his knees.

"Why, what's the matter with pappy's pets then? What's all this about?" he inquired, tenderly stroking their heads.

"Cousin Ishmael is a goin' away to be drowned—Boo-hoo-woo!" bawled Molly.

"And be burnt up, too!—Ar-r-r-r-r-r!" roared Johnny.

"No, I'm not going to be either one or the other!" said the subject of all their interest, cheerfully, as he took the children from Reuben, and enthroned them on his own knees. "I am going abroad for a little while, and I'll bring you ever so many pretty things when I come back!"

They were reassured, and stopped howling.

"How is your doll, Molly?"

"Her poor nose is broke!"

"I thought so. Well, I will bring you a prettier and larger doll, that can open and shut its mouth and cry!"

"Oh-h!" exclaimed Molly, making great eyes, in surprise and delight.

"Now, what else shall I bring you, besides the new doll?"

"Another one."

"What, two dolls?"

"Yes."

"And what else?"

"Another one, too."

"Three dolls! goodness! but tell me what you would like, besides the three dolls?"

"Some more dolls," persisted Molly, with her finger in her mouth.

"Whew!—What would you like Johnny?" inquired Ishmael, smiling on the little boy.

"I'd like a hatchet all of my own. I want one the worst kind of a way," said Johnny, solemnly.

"Shall I bring him a little box of dwarf carpenter-tools, Uncle Reuben?" inquired Ishmael, doubtfully.

"Just as you please, Ishmael. He can't do much damage with them inside, because Hannah is always here to watch him; and he may hack and saw as much as he likes outside," said Reuben.

These points being settled, and the children not only soothed, but delighted, Ishmael put them off his knees, and arose to depart.

He kissed the children, shook hands with Reuben, and embraced Hannah, whose maternal tenderness caused her to restrain her emotions, and forbear her croakings, lest she should frighten the children again.

Amid the fervent blessings of Reuben and Hannah, he now re-commenced his journey.

CHAPTER XC.

THE JOURNEY.

Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train;
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain;
These mixed with art and to due bounds confined,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind;
The lights and shades whose well-accorded strife
Give all the strength and colour to our life. Pope.

ISHMAEL'S journey up to the city was, upon the whole much enjoyed. It is true that, in the first instance, he had been going to see Beatrice; and now he was coming away from her; but he had passed one whole day and two pleasant evenings in her society, and he could live a long time on the memory of that visit.

It was ten o'clock when he arrived and rang at the door of his office.

The professor answered him.

"Well, Morris, all right here?" was Ishmael's cheerful greeting.

"All right, sir, now that you have come! We have been a little anxious within the last hour or two, sir; especially the judge, who is here?"

"Judge Merlin here?"

"Yes, sir. He came over to wait for you. And the two young gentlemen are also here, sir. They came back after tea. I heard them say to the— they thought it quite likely you would!

things to say to them to-night, and so they would wait."

"Quite right, Morris," said Ishmael, as he passed the professor and entered the office.

The judge and the two young friends occupied it. The former was walking up and down the door impatiently. The latter were seated at their desks.

The judge turned quickly to greet his young friend.

"Oh, Ishmael, I am so relieved that you have come at last! I have been very anxious for the last few hours."

"Why so, sir?" inquired Ishmael, as he shook hands with the old man. "Did you not know that I would be punctual when I gave you my word to that effect?"

"Oh, yes! but there are such things as accidents, you know, and an accident would have been very awkward on the eve of a voyage, for one must on this occasion go by sea to Newhaven or Leith. And you are late, you see!"

While divesting himself of his great coat, he explained to the judge the cause of his short delay—the detour he had made to bid good-bye to his old friends Hannah and Reuben. By the time he had done this, and seated himself, the professor passed through the office into the house.

In a few minutes he returned, saying:

"Mr. Worth, the ladies bid me say that they had kept the supper waiting for you, and they hope you will do them the favour to come in and partake of it, as it is your last evening at home for some time. And they will also be very much gratified if your friends will come and sup with you on this occasion."

"Will you come, judge? And you, too, gentlemen?" inquired Ishmael, turning to his companions, who all three bowed assent.

"Return to the ladies and say that we will come with pleasure," he said to the professor.

And then, with a smile and a bow, and a request to be excused for a few minutes, Ishmael passed into his bedroom to make some little change in his toilet.

When he rejoined his friends, they went into the supper-room, where they found an elegant and luxurious feast laid; and the two fair old ladies, in their soft, plain, gray delaine dresses and delicate lace caps, waiting to do the honours. These maiden ladies, with their refinement, intelligence and benevolence, had completely won the affections of Ishmael, who loved them with a filial reverence.

"My dear Mr. Worth," said the elder lady, approaching and taking his hand, "we hear that you are going to Scotland! how sudden! and how we shall miss you! But we hope that you will have a pleasant time!"

"Yes, indeed!" chimed in her sister, coming up to shake hands, "we do so! and I am sure in church, when we came to that part of the litany in which we pray for 'all who travel by land or by water,' I thought of you, and bore you up on that prayer! And I shall continue to do it until you get back safe!"

"And so shall I," added the elder.

"Thank you! thank you!" said Ishmael, warmly shaking both their hands. "I am sure if your good wishes and pious prayers can effect it, I shall have a pleasant and prosperous voyage."

"That you will," they simultaneously and cordially responded.

"And now permit me to introduce my friends—Judge Merlin, Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones." The gentlemen bowed and the ladies curtsied, and they presently sat down to supper.

"Judge, you will have an unexpected fellow-passenger—an old friend," said Ishmael.

"Ah! who is he?" sighed the Judge, who never spoke now without a sigh.

"Mr. Brudnell is going to Scotland."

"Indeed! What takes him there?"

"I do not know; unless it is the desire of seeing his mother and sisters. He did not tell me, and I did not ask him. In fact, we had so short a time together that there was no opportunity."

"Oh, you have seen him? Where did you meet him? And where is he now?"

"I met him at the Beacon, en route for London. He left there this morning, and expects to be here to-morrow."

As it was eleven o'clock when they arose from the supper-table, the Judge almost immediately took his leave, having previously arranged with Ishmael to join him at his hotel the next morning.

When they had departed, Ishmael went into his bedroom, where he found the Professor waiting.

"At last!" said the latter, as his master entered.

"What, Morris, you up yet? Do you know what time it is?" demanded Ishmael, in surprise.

"Yes, sir; it's two o'clock in the morning."

"Then you know you ought to have been in bed some ago."

Worth, I couldn't have slept, sir, if I

had gone to bed! I'm rising sixty years old, but I am just as much excited over this voyage to Scotland as if I was a boy of sixteen!"

"Ah, professor, if at your age I have such a fresh, young, evergreen heart, and such an aspiring, progressive spirit as yours, I shall think the Lord has blessed me! But now go to bed, old friend, and recruit your strength for the journey. Though 'the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak,' you know. The soul is immortal, but the body is perishable; so you must take care of it."

"Yes, sir, I will, just because you tell me. But I want to show you first what preparations I have made for the voyage to see if you approve them. You see, sir, when you went off so sudden, and left me to prepare and pack up your clothes, it just struck me that there must be many things wanted on a sea-voyage as is not wanted on land; but, of course, I didn't exactly know what they were. So, after cogitating awhile, I remembered that the judge had been to Scotland several times, and would know all about it; so I just made bold to go to and ask him. And he told me what you would require. And I went and got it, sir. Please look here!" said the professor, raising the lid of a trunk.

"You are very thoughtful, Morris. You are a real help to me," said Ishmael, smiling.

"You see, here are the warm, fine, dark flannel shirts, to be worn instead of linen ones on the voyage. And here is a thick woollen scarf. And here is your sea-cap. And oh! here is your sea-suit—of coarse pepper-and-salt! And if you believe me, sir, I went and gave the order to your tailor on Saturday morning, and told him the necessity for haste, and he sent the clothes home before twelve o'clock to-day. I'm only afraid they'll hang like a bag on you, sir, as the tailor had nothing but your business suit to measure you by. Though, to be sure, the fit of a sea-suit isn't much matter, sir."

"Certainly not. You are a treasure to me, Morris; but if you do not go to bed now and recruit your strength, my treasure may be endangered."

"I'm going now, sir; only I want to call your attention to the books I have put into your trunk, sir. I thought as we could only take a very few, I had better put in the Bible, and Shakespeare and Milton, sir."

"An admirable selection, Morris. Good night, dear old friend."

"Good night, sir; but please take notice I have put in a chessboard and a set of chessmen."

"All right, professor. Good night," repeated Ishmael.

"Yes, sir; good night! And there's a first-rate spy-glass, as I thought you'd like to have to see distant objects."

"Thank you, professor. Good night," reiterated Ishmael, scarcely able to restrain his laughter.

"Good night, sir. And there's some—well I see you're laughing at me."

"No, no, professor! or, if I was, it was in sympathy and pleasure; not in derision—Heaven forbid! Your boyish interest in this voyage is really charming to me, professor. But you must retire, my friend; indeed you must. You know we will have plenty of time to look over these things when we get on board the steamer," said Ishmael, taking the old man's hand, cordially shaking it, and resolutely dismissing him to rest.

And Ishmael himself retired to bed and to sleep, and being very much fatigued, he slept soundly until morning.

Though the professor was too much excited by the thoughts of his voyage to sleep much, yet he was up with the earliest dawn of morning, moving about softly in his master's room, strapping down the trunks and laying out travelling clothes and toilet apparatus.

The kind old maiden ladies also bestirred themselves earlier than usual this morning, that their young favourite should enjoy one more comfortable breakfast before he left.

And so when Ishmael was dressed and had just dispatched the professor to the stand to engage a cab to take them to the station, and while he was thinking of nothing better in the way of a morning meal than the weak muddy coffee and questionable bread and butter of the restaurant, he received a summons to the breakfast-room, where he found his two hostesses presiding over a breakfast of Mocha coffee, hot rolls, poached eggs, broiled salmon, and roast partridges.

Our young man had a fine healthy appetite of his own, and could enjoy this repast as well as any epicure alive; but better than all to his affectionate heart was the motherly kindness that had brought the two delicate old ladies out of their beds at this early hour to give him a breakfast.

They had their reward in seeing how heartily he ate. There was no one at the table but himself, and themselves, reminding him how long a journey he would have to make before he could sit down to another comfortable meal.

And when Ishmael had finished breakfast, he thanked them, and returned to his rooms to tie up some last little parcels. He had already caused the luggage to be carried out and placed on the cab, and now nothing remained to be done but to take leave of the two old ladies.

He shook hands with them affectionately and they blessed him fervently. And as soon as he had got into the cab and it had driven off with him, they turned and clasped each other around the neck and cried.

Truly Ishmael's good qualities had made him deeply beloved.

When the cab reached the hotel, Ishmael found Judge Merlin, all great-coated and shawled, walking up and down before the door with much impatience. His luggage had been brought down.

"You see I am in time, judge."

"Yes, Ishmael. Good-morning. I was afraid you would not be, however. I was afraid you would oversleep yourself after your fatigue. But have you breakfasted?"

"Oh, yes! My dear old friends were up before day to have breakfast for me."

"I tell you what, Ishmael, they are really two charming old ladies. They would make a home for a man," said the judge.

While they were talking, the porters were busy putting Judge Merlin's luggage upon Ishmael's cab.

"You have not heard whether the Errand Boy has reached the wharf?" inquired Ishmael.

"Not a word. There has been no arrival here this morning from any quarter, as I understand from the head waiter."

"I am really afraid Mr. Brudnell will miss us."

"If he does he will miss the voyage also. But we must not risk such a misfortune. Get in, boy, get in!" said the judge, hastily entering the cab.

Ishmael followed his example.

The professor climbed up to a seat beside the driver, and they drove off.

They reached the wharf just in time. In fact, they had not a moment to lose.

They had just got on board, and were expecting immediately to start, when Ishmael saw a gentleman in a great coat, and with his shawl over his arm and his umbrella and hat-box in his hand, hurrying frantically towards the vessel.

"There is Mr. Brudnell now!" he exclaimed with pleasure, and soon had the satisfaction of shaking him by the hand.

"So you are going with us to Scotland. I am very glad of it," said the judge, though, in fact, he looked very pale and worn, as if he never could be glad again in this world.

"Yes," said Mr. Brudnell; "I am very glad indeed to be of your party. Good morning, Worth!"

"Good morning, sir! You are fortunate in being in time."

"Very; I was within half a minute of being too late, and had a run for it, I assure you."

"Pray, sir, may I ask what procures us the pleasure—and it is indeed a great pleasure—of your company to Scotland?"

A shade of the deepest grief and mortification fell over the face of Herman Brudnell, as bending his head to the ear of his questioner, and speaking in a low voice, he replied:

"Family matters, of so painful and humiliating a nature as not to be discussed here, or scarcely anywhere else, in fact."

"Pardon me," said the judge, speaking in the same low tone, "some malignant star must reign! Had you asked the same question of me, concerning the motives of my journey, I might have truly answered you in the very same words."

And the old man groaned deeply; while Ishmael silently wondered what these family matters could be.

They were the last passengers on board. Fortunately at this season of the year there are not usually a very large number of voyagers. The best state-rooms in the first cabin, to use a common phrase, "went a begging."

And Judge Merlin, Mr. Brudnell, and Ishmael, were each accommodated with a separate state-room "amidships."

The professor was provided with a good berth in the second cabin.

There were about thirty other passengers in the first cabin, as many in the second, and quite a large number in the steerage.

CHAPTER IOL

THE VOYAGE.

Thalatta! Thalatta!

I greet thee, thou ocean eternal!

I give thee ten thousand times greeting,

My whole soul existing!

It was a splendid winter morning, and the river, with its shipping, presented a magnificent appearance.

lighted up by the rising sun, as the Oceana steamed out towards the open sea.

Our three friends stood in the after part of the deck, gazing upon the scene they were leaving behind them.

The professor waited in respectful attendance upon them.

The judge was now on his voyage! but oh! how should he find Claudia? Who could tell?

Still there was hope in the thought that he was going to her, and there was exhilaration in the wide expanse of sparkling waters, in the splendid winter sky, in the fresh sea-breeze and in the swift motion of the steamer.

His eyes, however, with those of all his party, were fixed upon the beloved receding shore; for so smooth as yet was the motion of the steamer, that it did not seem to be so much the Oceana that was sailing as the shore that was receding and dropping down below the horizon.

They stood watching it, until all the prominent objects grew gradually indistinct, and became blended in each other; then until the dimly diversified boundary faded into a faint irregular blue line; then until it vanished! Only then they left the deck and went down into the cabin to explore their state-rooms.

Ishmael found the professor, who had gone down a few minutes before him, busy unpacking his master's sea-trunk and getting him, as he said: "comfortably to housekeeping for the voyage."

When Ishmael entered, the professor was just in the act of setting up the three books that comprised the sea-library—carefully arranging them on a tiny circular shelf in the corner.

One of the state-room stewards who stood watching the "landlubber's" operations, sarcastically said:

"How long, friend, do you expect them books to stand there?"

"Until my master takes them down, sir," politely answered the professor.

"Well, now they'll stand there maybe until we get out among the big waves; when, at the first lurch of the ship, down they'll tumble upon somebody's head!"

"Sufficient unto the day," said the professor, persevering in his housekeeping arrangements.

All that day there was nothing to threaten the equilibrium of the books.

A splendid first day's sail they had. The sky was clear and bright; the sea serene and sparkling; the wind fresh and fair; and the motion of the steamer smooth and swift. Our travellers, despite the care at the bottom of their hearts, enjoyed it immensely! Who, with a remnant of hope remaining to them, can fail to sympathize with the beauty, glory and rapture of Nature, in her best moods?

At dinner they feasted with such good appetites as to call forth a jocular remark from a fellow-passenger who seemed to be an experienced voyager. He proved, in fact, to be a retired sea-captain, who was making this voyage partly for business, partly for pleasure. He was an unusually tall and stout old gentleman, with a stately carriage, a full, red face, and grey hair and beard.

"That is right. For, in all human probability, this is the last comfortable meal you will enjoy for many a day!" he said.

Those whom he addressed looked up in surprise and smiled in doubt.

The splendid sunny day was followed by a brilliant twilight night, in which all the favourable circumstances of the voyage so far, continued.

After tea the passengers went on deck to enjoy the beauty of the evening.

"What do you think, Captain Mountz?" inquired a gentleman; "will this fair wind continue long?"

"What the deuce is the wind to me? I'm a passenger!" responded the irresponsible retired captain.

They remained on deck enjoying the starlit glory of the sea and sky until a late hour, when fatigued and sleepy, they went below and sought their berths. To new voyagers there is in the first night at sea something so novel, so wild, so weird, so really unearthly, that few, if any, can sleep. They have left the old, still, safe land far behind, and are out in the dark upon the strange, unstable, perilous sea! It is a new element, a new world, a new life and the novelty, the restlessness and even the dangers have a fascination that charms the imagination and banishes repose.

A few voyages cures one of these fancies; but this is how a novice feels.

And thus it was with Ishmael. Fatigued as he was, he lay awake in his berth, soothed by the motion of the vessel and the sound of the sea, until near morning, when at length he fell into a deep sleep. It was destined to be a brief one, however!

Soon every passenger was waked up by the violent rolling and tossing of the ship; the creaking and

groaning of the rigging; the howling and shrieking of the wind and the rising and falling of the waves!

All the brave and active passengers tumbled up out of their berths and dressed quickly, while the timid and indolent cowered under their sheets, and waited the issue.

Ishmael was among the first on deck. Day was dawning.

Here all hands were on the alert. The captain was giving his orders as fast as they could be obeyed. One set of men were rapidly taking in sail. Another set were seeing to the lifeboats. The sea was running mountains high! the ship rolling fearfully; the wind so fierce, that Ishmael could scarcely keep his feet.

He saw old Captain Mountz on deck, and appealed to him.

"We are likely to have a heavy gale?"

"Oh, a capital of wind! Only a capital of wind!" contemptuously replied that "old salt," who, by the way, through the whole of the tempestuous voyage, could not be induced to acknowledge that they had had a single rush of wind worth noticing.

But the wind increased in violence, and the sea arose in wrath, and to battle they went, with their old irreconcilable hatred. And yet, notwithstanding the fury of wind and wave, the sun arose upon a perfectly clear sky.

Ishmael remained on deck, watching the fierce warring of the elements, until the second breakfast-bell rung, when he went below.

Neither Judge Merlin nor Mr. Brudnell were at the breakfast-table. In fact, there was no one in the saloon, except Captain Mountz, and two or three other seasoned old voyagers.

The remainder of the passengers were all dreadfully ill in their berths. The prediction of the old captain was fulfilled in their cases, at least; they had eaten the last comfortable meal they could enjoy for many days!

As soon as Ishmael had taken his breakfast, he went below in search of the companions of his voyage.

He found the judge lying flat on his back, with his hands clasping his temples, and praying only to be let alone.

The state-room steward was standing over him, bullying him with a cup of black tea, which he insisted upon his taking, whether or no.

"If he drinks it, sir, he will have something to decant, which will be better for him than all this empty retching. And after he has thrown up, he will be all right, and be able to get up, and eat his breakfast, and go on deck," said the man, appealing to Ishmael.

"Ishmael, kick that rascal out of my room, and break his neck, and throw him overboard," cried the judge, in anguish and desperation.

"Friend, don't you know better than to exasperate a sea-sick man? Leave him to me until he is better," said Ishmael, smiling on the well-meaning steward.

"But, sir, if he would drink this tea, he would throw up and—"

"Ishmael, will you strangle that diabolical villain, and pitch him into the sea?" thundered the judge.

The "diabolical villain" raised his disengaged hand in deprecation, and withdrew, carrying the cup of tea in the other.

"And now, Ishmael, take yourself off, and leave me in peace. I hate you, and I loathe the whole human race!"

Ishmael left the state-room, meditating on the demoralizing nature of sea-sickness.

He next visited Mr. Brudnell, whom he found in a paroxysm of illness, with another state-room steward over him.

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!" moaned the victim. "This heavy, rising, falling sea, and this reeling, pitching, tossing ship! If it would only stop for one moment! I should be glad of anything that would stop it—even a fire!"

"I am very sorry to see you suffering so much, sir. Can I do anything for you?" inquired Ishmael, sympathetically.

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! No—hold the basin for me again, Bob! No, Ishmael, you can do nothing for me, only to go away. I hate anyone to see me in this debasing sickness, for it is debasing, Ishmael."

Ishmael backed out in double quick time.

And next he found his way to the second cabin, to the bedside of the professor.

Apparently Jim Morris had just suffered a very severe paroxysm; for he lay back on his pillow, with pale, sharp, sunken features, and almost breathless lungs.

"I am sorry to see you so ill, professor," said Ishmael, tenderly laying his hand on the old man's forehead.

"It is nothing, Mr. Ishmael, sir; only a little sea-sickness, as all the passengers have. I dare say it will,

soon be over. I am only concerned, because I can't come and wait on you," said the professor, speaking faintly, and with great effort.

"Never mind that; dear, old friend. I can wait on myself very well; and you too, while you need attention."

"Oh, Mr. Ishmael, sir. You are much too kind; but I shall be all right in a little time, and am so glad you are not sick, too."

"No, I am not sick, Morris. But I am afraid that you have been suffering very much," said Ishmael, as he noticed the old man's pallid countenance.

"Oh, no, Mr. Ishmael. Don't disturb yourself. I shall be better soon. You see, when I was very bad, they persuaded me to drink a pint of sea-water, which really made me much worse, though it was all well meant. But now I am much better; and I think I will try to get up on deck. Why, law, sea-sickness ain't pleasant, to be sure; but then it is worth while to bear it for the sake of being at sea for once in a life," said Jim Morris, trying to smile away his own illness and Ishmael's commiseration.

"God bless you for a patient, gentle-spirited old man, and a true philosopher. When you are able to rise, Morris, I will give you my arm up on deck, and have a pallet made for you there, and the fresh air will do you good."

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Ishmael. It is good to be ill, when one is so kindly cared for. Isn't there a gale, sir?"

"Yes, Morris, a magnificent one. The old enemies, wind and sea, are in their most heroic moods, and are engaged in a pitched battle: this poor ship, like a neutral power, is suffering somewhat from the assaults of both."

"I think I will go and look on that battle-field," smiled the professor, trying to rise.

Ishmael helped him, and when he was dressed, gave him his arm, and took him up on deck, at the same time requesting one of the second cabin stewards to follow with a rug and cushion.

This man, wondering at the affectionate attention paid by the stately young gentleman to this sick servant, followed them up and made the professor a pallet near the wheel-house on the deck.

When, with the assistance of the steward, Ishmael had made his old retainer comfortable, he placed himself with his shoulders against the back of the wheel-house, to steady himself, for the ship was rolling terribly; and he stood gazing forth upon the stormy surface of the sea.

A magnificent scene. The whole ocean, from the central speck on which he stood, to the vast, vanishing circle of the horizon, seemed one boundless, boiling cauldron. Millions of waves were simultaneously leaping in thunder from the abyss, and roaring themselves into blue mountain peaks, capped with white foam, and sparkling in the sunlight for a moment to be swallowed up in the darkness of the roaring deep the next.

A lashing, tossing, heaving, falling, foaming, glancing rise and fall of liquid mountains and valleys, awful but ravishing to look upon.

Ishmael stood leaning against the wheel-house, with his arms folded, and his eyes gazing out at sea. His whole soul was exalted to reverence and worship, and he murmured within himself:

"It is the Lord that commandeth the waters; it is the glorious God that maketh the thunder!"

As for the professor, he lay propped up at his master's feet, and looking forth upon the mighty war of wind and wave. The sight had subdued him. He was content only to exist and enjoy.

(To be continued.)

WE learn from Flensburg that the widow of the late King of Denmark had arrived there, accompanied by State Councillor Schlegel and her ladies of honour. This lady has purchased a mansion near Paris, and intends shortly to take up her residence there. It is stated that the Countess has made a will on the solicitation of the executors of the King, and that she has bequeathed to Denmark, after her death, all the works of art belonging to the King, and has, also, only bequeathed the seventh portion of her property to her family, the remainder being left to public benevolent institutions.

WRITING ON THE WALL.—We noticed lately an optical discovery—a hand appears on the wall and writes, and then rubs out what it has written. A correspondent explains how the clever though simple trick is done:—take and light the gas in a room after daylight. Next procure a mirror, and stand at the door of the room, and hold the mirror so that it will throw the light of the gas on the wall or white sheet outside of the room. Now observe that by holding your hand over the face of the mirror, the same hand appears on the white wall or sheet. Next procure a small paint-brush, about the size of a pen, and dip it black paint, and then make any figure or character the reverse way on

the mirror, and of course the same will appear on the wall on which the mirror is shining. Now lay the brush aside, and rub out the figures or characters off the mirror, and of course they will disappear off the wall also."

THERE were discovered a few days since, on the banks of the Rhone, near Lyons, forty-five Gallo-Roman tombs, the skeletons in which were complete, the face turned towards the east, and the head supported by a small earthen urn.

MORE IN HIS HEAD THAN MOST PEOPLE.—In August last Captain Gray, the master of a Peterhead whaler, had his vessel fishing in Davis's Straits, when one day his crew caught a whale. The whale, when captured, had a harpoon in its head, and appeared to have carried this ornament about with it for more than twenty years. The shank of the harpoon was all water-worn. It bore the mark, however, quite distinctly, "Fow and Fawcus." The harpoon is now in Peterhead museum.

ADVENTURES IN AFRICA.

BY COLONEL W. DUNLAP.

WHEN we left the Cape we had intended to travel as far as the Zambesi, and had even had some thought of following that great river to its mouth; but we, who had faced the monarchs of the forest without fear, were turned back from our course by an insect not much larger than the common house-fly.

I noticed a peculiar buzzing sound close by my ear, and shortly afterwards a fly settled upon the back of my hand. At first I thought it was a small bee, and allowed it to remain; but presently it inserted its proboscis into the skin, causing a slight, sharp sensation, like the bite of a mosquito, and I brushed it away. A few minutes afterwards I heard an exclamation from one of our Kaffir guides, and saw him brushing something from the back of an ox. I asked him what was the matter, and he told me that a tsetse had bitten the ox. As quickly as possible I armed all our men with leafy boughs, and directed them to keep by the animals, and brush away every fly they saw. In half an hour we had passed over the marshy tract, and the danger was behind us.

The tsetse is one of the most remarkable insects in the world. In size it is about one-third larger than our common black house-fly; its colour is a light, dirty brown, and the body is circled by four rings of alternate yellow and black. The wings are larger in proportion to its body than those of common flies, and in the warm sunshine its motions are so quick that the hand cannot reach it; but at night, and in cold, rainy weather, it is sluggish and harmless. Its proboscis is divided into three parts, the middle part being that which is inserted into the skin, and through which the blood of its victim is drawn, the other two acting as a shield for the lancet when not in use. Upon the upper part of the proboscis, forming a slight protuberance upon the head, is a minute sac, which contains the poison. The only office of this poison, like that of the mosquito, is to dilute the blood, for the particles of animal blood are too gross to be drawn up through the minute passage of the lancet-pipes of these little pests.

And now we come to the peculiarity which is so wonderful. The bite of the tsetse is perfectly harmless to man, causing not a particle more inconvenience or pain than the bite of the flea or mosquito; and it is also harmless to wild animals. At any rate, the animals of the forest roam with impunity in the *habitats* of the tsetse, where they must be at times as thickly covered with the insects as cows are by flies in English pastures, and yet I never knew a wild animal to suffer from the bite, nor did I ever hear of such a thing. But the horse, the ox, or the dog, bitten by the tsetse, is sure to die of the poison. Thousands of domestic animals die every year, in the tsetse districts, and yet the ingenuity of the native doctors has never been able to find an antidote. At first the ox or horse so bitten feels no pain, and betrays no discomfort. At the end of some days, however, the eye loses its lustre, and becomes humid; the nose begins to run; the skin starts and quivers as though with the chills; and swellings appear upon the jaws and upon some parts of the body. The animal begins to grow poor in flesh; the muscles become flaccid; and ere long purging comes on, and the victim soon dies in a state of absolute exhaustion.

Dissection shows that the poison has been gradually changing the nature of the whole material of the animal body. And poison in quantity how minute! Probably not equal in bulk to the thousandth part of a drop of water! The skin is started from the body; the fat (what little is left) is of a greenish colour, and like rancid oil in consistency; the muscular tissue is soft and flabby, the heart being no harder than the liver of a chicken.

One large-framed ox, which had died of the bite of the tsetse, and which I opened, did not contain red

blood enough to fill a wine-glass—the poison had completely exhausted every drop of it. And this induces the thought that the minute particle of poison injected by the tsetse is a germ which reproduces itself by feeding upon the blood, as plants feed upon elements in earth and air. The change goes on—the poison growing, and the blood giving up its life-principle—until the red blood is all used up: and then of course, the poor creature fails and dies.

But who shall solve the problem still left? The horse is sure to die if bitten by the tsetse, and yet the mule and the zebra do not suffer from the infliction. The ox cannot outlive the bite of the poisonous insect a month, but the buffalo, roaming wild in the forest, suffers no more from it than from the dropping upon its back of the autumnal leaf. To the sheep the bite is fatal; but the goat and the antelope are independent of all danger.

This is so, proved by long and careful observation, and attested by all who have had opportunity to investigate the subject. And why is it so? To me it presents a phenomenon entirely inexplicable.

Another peculiarity of the tsetse is this: It is confined to particular habitats or localities. In some places the tsetse will infest one side of the river, even to the water's edge, while directly upon the opposite side it is never seen; and in others a narrow district will be infested while, only a mile beyond, the ox and horse may be picketed in perfect safety.

There are localities, however, where the inhabitants can keep no domestic animal except the goat, on account of this scourge; and this is particularly the case on the rich and fertile banks of the Zambesi.

Whole herds of cattle have been lost by allowing them to wander off into these infested districts. Lapali, chief of the village of Dalaho, on the Iala river, told me that, only two years before, some careless herdsmen of his allowed his oxen and cows to stray away into one of the tsetse districts, and he lost over a thousand of them—all of them dying from the fatal bite of that little buzzing insect.

While at the fountain, six of our oxen began to fall. Two of our horses gave out a few hours afterwards. As soon as I saw the symptoms I knew that the animals were lost; and under the circumstances, my only hope was that we might lose no more. We inspanned on the 17th of October, and marched ten miles; and on the 19th the two horses died, and on the 20th the six oxen followed.

As I stood over the shrunken remains of our once faithful animals, I could not help asking myself what in the world the tsetse was made for. The thought was not one of impiety—it was only the passage of an emotion such as every man is apt to feel when brought under the influence, or into the presence, of the destructive forces of nature. While I stood thus thinking, Harry, who was by my side, echoed my thoughts in words:

"Ah," said I, trying to throw off a regret which could avail me nothing, "if we only suffered from such causes, we should be happy indeed. But, Hal, where one man suffers from circumstances which nature holds beyond his control ten hundred thousand suffer from their own deliberate sins."

"That's so!" responded Harry. And with this bit of moralizing we proceeded to carefully dissect one of the oxen, the result of which I have already given.

With the loss of these oxen we were left rather in want of locomotive force for our teams; but our native guides informed me that only about fifteen miles distant was a village where they were sure oxen could be procured. So we tracked on, and on the 22nd we reached the place designated. Like most other villages where we had stopped, this was situated in a pleasant, fertile valley, well watered, and bearing excellent grass. The patriarch's name was Anam, and he called his village Boja. I soon discovered that he had a large herd of cattle; but I was not in a hurry about intimating that we needed any. We camped just out of the village, in a grove of mokolane palms; and as I fancied that I detected a thieving propensity on the part of some of the villagers, I caused a careful watch to be kept over our property.

Anam's behaviour was very friendly. He invited us to dine with him, on the very next day after our arrival, which invitation we cordially accepted. The dinner was served in the open air, beneath majestic palms, and the women who waited upon us were the best proportioned of any that I had seen in Africa. They were tall and straight, with smooth, finely turned limbs; and their motions were easy and graceful.

The meal consisted of boiled meat, served up in square wooden dishes; bread of wheat and barley; and various kinds of fruit. Although not quite up to the standard of our camp fare, yet the food was good and palatable, and we found no trouble in satisfying our appetites.

On the following day we invited Anam, with some of his chief men, to dine with us. Gash and Fitzben

did their best, and the result was, that our guests were delighted. Anam eat of a pudding made of flour and eggs, and raisins, and spices, and boiled in a bag, and served up with sweet sauce. He asked me who made it. I pointed to Fitzben. He gazed awhile, and then he wished to know if I would sell the marvellous cook. I had half a mind to refer him to Ben Gilroy; but fearing that, between Ben and Fitz, some joke might be delivered which would not sit well with the sable chieftain, I simply informed him that our servant was a free man, who had a family of his own in a far-off country, and that nothing could possibly induce him to remain behind after we had gone.

Anam seemed much disappointed at this; but so-laced himself with one more liberal slice of the wonderful pudding.

After our dinner-party had dispersed, Harry and I mounted our horses for a tramp in the forest, taking Jot and Tickom with us, and leaving Ben and Aber to look out for the waggons. We had gone some five or six miles without seeing any game worth shooting, when our dogs, which were some distance ahead, suddenly set up a loud barking. We spurred on, and we soon found that they were fleeing from us, barking as they went. By and by, however, they stopped, and their barking was changed to an angry yelping; and when we came in sight of them we found that they had a herd of about a dozen zebras at bay. They had driven the game into a corner, where the faces of two high cliffs met at an acute angle, and the frightened animals, thus brought up, had stopped in regular line of battle, with their heels to the front, and were kicking most furiously. An experienced sergeant could not have arranged twelve soldiers in better order, nor in a position for more effective defence. The dogs—four of them—flew at all points, snapping and snarling and yelping; but they could not break the line, nor could they approach the enemy near enough to lay a paw or a tooth upon them. We stopped our horses and watched the sport; and for full five minutes these same tactics were kept up. The zebras kept their line intact, their heels flying the while like flashes of light. The dogs were mad, and at length one of them, venturing a little too near, received a kick that sent him into some bushes two rods away, upon which his companions seemed inclined to draw off. I saw at once that if they did this, the zebras would wheel and flee. Harry saw the same thing; for he said to me, at the same time clicking the hammer of his rifle:

"Colonel, I must have one of those beautiful skins."

I was of the same mind, and told him that we would fire together, for which purpose we slipped from our saddles, giving the reins to our after-riders. We were not a moment too soon, for hardly had we gained our feet when the dogs drew off, as another of their number received a kick, and the zebras made a wheel. We had opportunity for a good aim, however, and as we fired two of the animals fell. The dogs would have given chase to the others, but Jot quickly called them back.

I hurried up to the zebra which I had shot, and as I found him struggling, I drew my knife to put him out of his suffering; but he was ahead of me. Just as I stooped towards him he started to his feet, gazed a moment upon me, and then whirled and let his heels fly like lightning. One hoof passed so near as to graze the tip of my left ear, giving me an idea of a lightning-flash in my eyes and a thunderbolt in my head. Had that hoof come two inches nearer I should never have known what hurt me—it would have split my head like a cannon-ball. The maddened animal was drawing himself up again, whether for more kicking, or whether for a run, I cannot say; but he did neither. Harry, thanks to his quick eye and quick hand, saw the trouble, and gave the beast a second shot that laid him low. My ball, as we discovered upon examination, had hit him upon the head in such a manner as to stun him without doing him any serious injury.

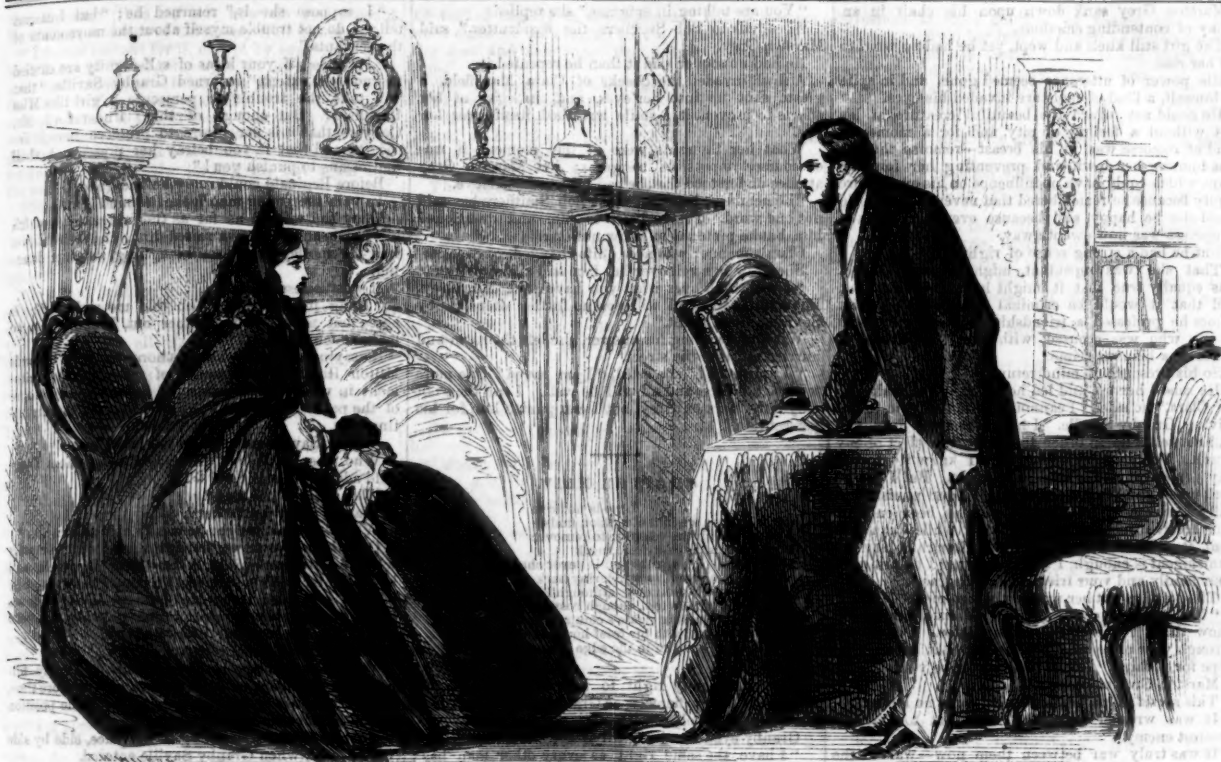
These zebras were the handsomest I had yet seen. They were large and fat, with sleek glossy hides, the ground colour being a light, creamy yellow, with bands, or stripes, of jet black extending to the extremity of every part. We gave the game into the charge of our after-riders, who promised to remove the skins in good shape and bring in such pieces of the meat as they deemed fit for food, and then we turned our horses' heads back towards the camp. We had only come out for a bit of sport, and we had had it; and I, at least, had had an adventure.

"I think, colonel," said Harry, as we rode along, "that you never had a much narrower escape than that."

"That is so," I replied. "And to think, too, that it was from one of the most timid and inoffensive animals that roam these forests."

"Such is life, colonel."

"That is so, again."



[CLARA MANSFIELD'S INTERVIEW WITH MARSTON.]

A YOUNG GIRL FROM THE COUNTRY.

By VANE IRETON ST. JOHN.

Author of "The Queen of Night," "In Spite of the World," &c.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Lady Caroline.—You offer life: but what is life to me
Without his love? The Rivals.

He was sitting by the fire when she came in, and scarcely noticed her entrance.

She was clothed in black from head to foot, and veiled deeply also, but Marston Grey, when he looked up and saw the gleam of her eyes through the lace, knew at once it was Clara Mansfield.

He had returned to his chambers that day in a strange mood.

Life had begun to assume a new aspect for him.

Pledged to discover the truth in regard to Gabriel Desney's death, he found himself also compelled to assume the part of comforter to the one he had left behind him, and in this task he discovered that he was but too well assisted by his own heart.

Louisa became to him not the object of pity—not one to be consoled with and saved from despair for friendship's sake—but one who must be rescued that she might be the sweetest companion of his life.

There was hope in his heart.

Why, he knew not.

Louisa was still devoured by sorrow, still silent and melancholy; but there was one thing which rendered her case less hopeless—the agony of her mind had ceased to prey upon her body; the roses were returning to her cheeks, and the elasticity to her form.

As yet he had not dared to hint to her the love which was rapidly growing up in his heart.

He knew not how it might affect her.

It might be that she would gladly discover one in whom she could again repose her trust, if not her virgin love—yet it might be, on the other hand, that the suggestion would offend her, and that he might lose her friendship for ever.

In this dilemma he had no one to fly to for advice, and in the quiet evening he had been sitting through the twilight, thinking of their last meeting, and wondering along what tortuous path his destiny was about to lead him.

To a man who had been indulging in a reverie the sudden appearance of this veiled woman was in itself an unpleasant thing enough; but had he been able to

fathom the depths of the troubled heart which panted beneath that tremulous bosom, he would gladly have avoided the interview, and almost pitied the girl for her crimes.

The sudden disappearance of Granby Saville she had at first attributed to business connected with the Castleton peerage.

But as time went on, and no news came to her, she became alarmed, and her suspicions at once fixed themselves on Marston Grey.

To determine, with her, was to act, and she at once proceeded to his house.

She threw back the veil as she closed the door behind her, and there was a grim, cruel smile upon her lips, as she came over to the fire, and sat down near him.

"You did not expect me, Mr. Grey," she said, quietly.

"No—indeed."

"You should have done so."

"Why?"

"Because you have betrayed me. You should have not only expected me, but expected my revenge, which sooner or later shall overtake you, Marston Grey, if I find my suspicions true!"

Marston looked at her searchingly.

Her cold, pale face, her stony eyes, alarmed him.

This woman was capable of anything, yet he must speak the truth.

"Miss Mansfield," he said, "I have betrayed you, since you like to use the term. Granby Saville is ruined: the man he trusted robbed him of all he possessed and fled, and he proposed to ask you to become his wife, and return to Australia to repair his fortune, from such a fate as this it was necessary to save him, and I told him —"

"A lie! a lie! a foul, infamous lie!" cried the girl wildly.

"I told him no lie, Clara," said Grey, gently; "I spoke of my suspicions. I made no accusation. If Gabriel Desney were now alive, and you had never even attempted his murder, it would still be the same. He would not marry one who had been the wife of another."

She gazed at him with wild, staring eyes as he spoke.

This was a new blow.

It seemed to make her fate irretrievable.

"Did he say this?" she asked.

"He said it to me of others: not of you."

There was silence for a moment.

Marston Grey gazed at the fire, and the wretched girl seemed fixing her glance upon vacancy.

At length she rose.

"Marston Grey," she said "you are a bitter, implacable foe. You have ruined me, you have blighted my whole life. You shall see that my revenge will be equal to the wrong you have done me."

Marston rose also.

His face was very pale, but though his lips trembled his manner was firm.

"Clara," he said, "as Heaven is my judge, I have acted as I have acted because I feel it to be my duty. It is from no private spite to you, but from a sacred conviction that I am right, that I have prevented Granby Saville from becoming your husband."

Clara laughed sneeringly.

"Do you imagine, Marston Grey," she cried, "that I am so shallow as to believe you? Do you think that I cannot see through your sham convictions, your hollow friendship. Can I not understand that all that you have done is but part of your grand scheme to punish me, because I scorned your love? We will have done, henceforth, with such visionary things as honour, conviction, friendship—you are not capable of appreciating them, I cannot afford to abide by them. Ours will be a duel, of hate, in which you will find that a woman's weapons are the strongest."

At this moment Marston almost feared her.

She stood before him, the very incarnation of a beautiful fiend.

Her lovely features were undisturbed by passion: her colour was now restored, her bosom heaved violently, her whole form seemed to swell and expand.

But fortunately for him, and those who depended on his firmness, he did not permit his emotions to be seen.

"Clara," he said, "I can readily forgive you for misjudging me; but I have acted according to my conscience, and by its teachings I am prepared to abide."

His determined manner overawed her.

A strange change came over her.

This time there was no acting—no deception on her part.

Her colour left her face—her form trembled—she staggered forward, and clasping her hands wildly, she fell at Marston's feet.

"Oh! for God's sake, Marston," she cried, as the tears welled from her eyes, and fell burning on the floor, as she bowed her beautiful head; "for God's sake do not persecute me thus. Undo the terrible wrong you have done me—restore to me the only being I can ever love in this world, and I will forgive you—bless you—worship you, if you will—be your very slave!"

Marston Grey sank down upon his chair in an agony of contending emotions.

The girl still knelt and wept, yet he had no word to bid her rise.

His power of utterance seemed gone, and in spite of himself, a kind of moisture invaded his eyes.

He could not regard the beautiful creature at his feet without a feeling of pity, and for a moment a kind of remorse was in his breast—remorse that he was hunting her down, and preventing her forming plans which could have no influence on his own future—pity because he remembered that never in this world could she be happy, and because even her vision of happiness was now swept away.

But he had a strong sense of right.

That she was repentant, might be true; but it was equally true that it might last but a short time, and that it would be criminal to allow a man, for whom he professed a friendship, to become the wife of one who was accused, with every semblance of truth, of a heinous crime.

So his presence of mind returned.

He raised her up, and led her back to her chair.

"Clara," he said, "I cannot, will not aid you in deceiving Granby Saville. I have done my duty, and will not tell a lie in order to destroy the effect of my words. You are very unhappy. I know it—I even pity you, great as has been your crime. But I can do nothing—I can promise nothing. Your punishment will be private—it has already, perhaps, been enough. But deceive another you shall not, while I can prevent it. Remember, then, that although I say the punishment is enough, I say it because I do not wish your family and your friends to be disgraced."

The suffices left her manner in a moment.

"Yes, yes," she cried, with her old cruel smile. "I know that. I know you love my sister. I have seen through your presence of conscience. But I warn you, hope for nothing. Louisa shall never be yours!"

Marston Grey stood silent.

This secret of his heart, then, was his no longer.

It was wrested from him, and that too, by his greatest enemy.

It was truly war between them now—war to the death.

For a moment he could not speak.

She took advantage of his silence.

"Ah!" she cried, "you see I have you in my power. Louisa is with me daily—hourly. I will see that you do not assume a fatal influence over her. If Granby Saville is to be torn from me by your machinations I will see that you, too, are unhappy. I will drag Louisa from you, as you have dragged him from me—I will pursue you through life with undying, implacable hate."

Here was but a momentary triumph.

For a while, he had yielded to softer influences, and pitted her.

Now, the fear of losing the great prize upon which his heart was set restored him to himself, and made him less mindful of her feelings.

"You are wrong," he said quietly, "Louisa knows all; you can have no influence with her."

She grasped the table by which she stood, as if to prevent her falling, and her action lips trembled.

"You have not dared to poison her mind, too, against me?" she murmured.

"I have told her everything, and from you, therefore, I have nothing to fear."

Clara Mansfield felt crushed.

There seemed now indeed no hope.

For the first time she feared Marston Grey.

"What is it you wish me to do?" she said, in a hoarse, thick voice, "do you want me to confess to a crime I never committed, and be branded as a felon, to suffer ignominious punishment?"

"No!" returned Marston. "I require nothing of the kind. I wish you to take suspicion off the guiltless, and no longer to endeavour to link your guilty life with that of Granby Saville. If you leave England or retire into obscurity, I will have done with you for ever."

"How kind, how considerate," cried the girl, who was nearly maddened by the coolness of him who was pitted against her in this game of life. "You only ask me to destroy my whole hope in this world—to cast aside everything most dear to me. This done, you will leave me to myself. All this is to be consented to by me, when there is no evidence against me, not one title of evidence, but your suspicion."

"You are mistaken," said Marston; "there is evidence, strong evidence."

"Where?"

"At Ellersby."

"I do not understand you."

"I refer to him who is in your pay, who preserves your secret because he receives hush-money."

Clara's eyes were fixed upon him with a searching look.

Whether she understood him or not she resolved not to appear to do so.

"You are talking in enigmas," she replied.

"I allude to Bob Smithers the woodcutter," said Marston Grey.

He had no sooner said it than he repented it.

A flush invaded the cheeks of Clara Mansfield, a gleam shot up into her eyes, and, in spite of her efforts to prevent it, a smile wreathed itself over her lips.

What her thoughts were at this moment it was of course, impossible to guess; but Marston Grey at once understood that he had made a false move.

"Remember," he said, "that Bob Smithers has said not one word. I have been to him and questioned him, but he pretends to know nothing."

Clara's manner was now quite changed.

She drew her veil over her face and said quietly:

"I will think over what you have said, Mr. Grey. For a time at least, I will seek no further after Granby Saville. Good night."

Without awaiting his answer, she left the room and hurried out into the street.

"I am saved!" she cried, "I am saved! One more terrible sacrifice, and all will be well. I can then not only defy Marston Grey, but I can punish him for his persecution."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

"Have you any right to interfere here?" cried Reginald Conyers fiercely, as Granby Saville rushed to the rescue of Cicely Crowe.

Granby eyed him haughtily. "I have the same right as every other man has; that of defending a woman from insult," returned he, "and more than this, I am a friend of hers."

Reginald glanced at Cicely with a look of inquiry. "Yes, indeed," she said, "Mr. Fortescue is my friend, and I thank him very much for his interference."

Reginald's lip curled contemptuously, but from the general appearance of Granby Saville he judged him to be a gentleman.

"Sir," he said, "you shall hear of me again. Will you oblige me with your card?"

Granby smiled. "I do not carry cards about me when I go to country fairs, because I do not expect to meet anyone who is worthy of such a compliment. You must be content, therefore, with knowing that my name is Henry Fortescue."

Reginald drew forth an enamelled card-case—a present from Alice, paid for with his own money—and presented a card to Saville.

The latter read it and started back in dismay.

"You seem to know the name," said Reginald sarcastically. "I do," returned Granby, with an effort to recover his composure, "but I do not see what good will result from our meeting again. What is to be said can be said now. This lady has been offended, but she forgives you. The only favour she asks is that you will not molest her again."

Reginald laughed. "Truly, you are a cool champion of the fair," he said, "a very oracle—a prophet—since you tell the lady's thoughts without first asking them. You will, however, hear from me again."

Granby detained him as he moved to go.

"Stay," he said, "let me send this lady away and have a word with you. Miss Rushfield," he added, "excuse me; Mr. Muddleby will escort you homewards. With this person I have important business."

He walked away.

"Sir," he said to Reginald, "allow me to ask a question, which has no reference to what has occurred: is the family returned to Milton Hall?"

Reginald glanced at him in wonder.

"It has returned," he said, "though, how the fact can interest you, I know not."

He was surprised greatly by the quiet demeanour of Granby Saville towards him, after the insult he had offered to one in whom he evidently took an interest.

His little knew that the man who stood by his side was his half-brother—the one to whom the heritage was due—the one who unjustly was walking in the darkness that he might walk in the light.

"And Madame Delaune is with them?" continued Granby, without appearing to notice the interrogation of his companion.

Reginald answered haughtily.

"I suppose she is," returned he; "but I cannot tell. I do not trouble myself about the movements of the servants."

"I wonder, if your ideas of self-dignity are carried to such an extent," returned Granby Saville, "that you take the trouble to persecute a girl like Miss Rushfield? But enough of this. Understand, Mr. Conyers, that it is her desire to preserve herself incognito, and that if you betray her presence I shall find means to punish you!"

Before Reginald could reply he had gone.

In vain the young man looked around him.

They had walked as far as the bridge, near which his horse and groom awaited him, and behind him was the motley crowd, still laughing, singing, dancing.

It was useless to return.

"Hang it," he said, "Job told me right. She is here; but now I've found her out, I don't seem to make much progress."

So saying, he turned on his horse and rode towards Milton Hall, while dreaming of the wild excitement in which he had plunged the hero and heroine of the petite drama in which he had acted an unwitting part.

Granby Saville returned to the booth eagerly.

Who, then, was this Ellen Rushfield whom Reginald addressed as Cicely?

Who was the old man?

Was he really her father?

Whether or not, might he not be able to aid him? One thing, however, he determined on, no matter what resulted from his interview with Rushfield and his daughter. He would see Madame Delaune. She it was who had recognized him at John Shadow's lodgings, and she seemed to be the only one who could give him real and definite advice.

His mind had undergone a change.

What had seemed a blank was now gradually filling up, and he was now enabled to see no more time, but to make a desperate attempt to reach the position which he felt it to be his right to fill.

Reginald Crowe was sitting in his place, side by side with Cicely, when Granby Saville entered.

She was telling him her adventure.

"Excuse me," said Saville, "for intruding upon your confidences. But I fancy I have discovered our interests to be identical. If so, we can work together. I have heard John Shadow speak of Cicely Crowe—is your name Crowe?"

The schoolmaster and his daughter turned deadly pale.

"Fate seems to pursue me everywhere!" said the old man; "who are you, sir? Are you a friend of John Shadow?"

Granby Saville smiled.

"Once his friend—then his greatest foe. But neither one nor the other now, since he is dead."

Crowe gazed at him in blank amazement.

"Dead?" he muttered to himself; "dead!"

He seemed unable to realize the truth of such news.

"Yes!" added Granby, taking from his pocket the scrap of paper announcing John Shadow's death; "read this."

The old man took the paper from his hands, and read it in silence.

"It is true!" he murmured; "see, Cicely, our great enemy is dead!"

While she was reading it, he turned to Granby Saville.

"And what is your name, sir?" he asked.

Granby smiled.

"Well—well," he said; "let it be so. I will begin by telling my story."

And then, in detail, he told his story up to the latest moment, purposely weaving with it the episodes in which Clara Mansfield figured.

Both father and daughter listened earnestly, though of the two Cicely was the more absorbed.

Her heart had never yet experienced the soft influence of love. Reginald Conyers she had once imagined herself to admire; but that foolish dream had passed away.

If, then, her heart was not at this moment quite a blank, it was Granby Saville who filled it.

When he had finished speaking, the schoolmaster took his hand.

"Mr. Saville," he said, "I may be able to assist you. I will tell you, first, how far I have been connected with John Shadow; and then, I think, we can together form a plan by which you can communicate with Madame Delaune without fear of detection."

The schoolmaster's story was soon told.

"Unless you believe me guiltless of the crime laid to my charge," he added, when he had explained all, "it will be useless for us to endeavour to act. As Heaven is my judge, I am innocent of robbing Mangles Worsop, though appearances are wonderfully against me."

"My dear sir," said Saville, "I fully believe in

your innocence; but tell me, how do you account for the disappearance of the money from the shop?"

"I cannot account for it, except by supposing that, while Mangies Worsop was upstairs, and when I had gone away, some one entered from the street, and stole the money. Fate seems specially to have set itself against me, for, to this moment, I do not know what made me leave the antiquary's house in such a hurry. All I remember is, that some hand seemed beckoning me away—some impulse leading me out again into the world, to seek the child I had lost."

There was silence for a moment.

Then Granby said:

"And what, Mr. Crowe, is the plan you have for arranging a meeting between me and Madame Delaume?"

"I myself will go to Milton Hall," returned the schoolmaster, "and will explain to her your wish to see her. It will scarcely be prudent for you to venture there, under all circumstances, while she, no doubt, will be willing to come hither to see you, if she knows how important it is for you to see her."

"Your advice is just," said Saville. "It will, no doubt, be most imprudent for me to venture to Milton Hall."

"Yes; particularly at the present moment, when you have raised the ire of that little popinjay, Reginald."

"When will you go to the hall?"

"Any time you please."

"To-morrow evening?"

"Yes. I will proceed thither as soon as it becomes dark, and arrange a meeting for the same night."

"During the conversation, Cleely had remained quite still, and never ventured to utter a word."

When Granby Saville had left them, she rose, wished her father "good-night," and retired to her room.

A strange emotion filled her breast.

A suffocating feeling was at her heart.

Until now she had never experienced it—never felt anything approaching it.

Until Granby Saville had declared himself to be heir to the Castleton peerage and a magnificent fortune, she had never known the extent of the feeling which, in little more than a fortnight, had sprung up in her breast.

Now she felt overwhelmed.

Fate seemed against her.

"I no sooner feel happy," she murmured, as she laid herself down upon her hard bed—"I no sooner feel happy than something occurs to dash the cup of joy from my lips. Mr. Saville has seemed to me the impersonation of all that is good and noble in man. I admired him, I feel attracted towards him, I find that I love him only to discover that he is immeasurably above me."

She strove to overcome the feeling of despair which crept into her heart.

But it was useless.

Her eyes filled with tears, her bosom panted with the violent beatings of her heart—she seemed choking, and murmured wildly in the agony of her newly-found love:

"Heaven grant that this dream may be reality, or that it may pass away from me once and for ever!"

And yet her emotion was one which few maidens fall to experience, and few, indeed, would wish to escape.

Sweet vision of virgin love!

First dream of affection!

What woman would wish to pass through many years without that most delightful of short existences? So with her bright tears yet in her eyes, Cleely Crowe dropped into quiet sleep.

The angels themselves, I suppose, must have rocked her to rest, for she dreamed that her love for Granby Saville was returned, and that he had cast aside everything—rank, title, riches—for her sake.

CHAPTER XLV.

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:
To-morrow's sun is as bright as 'tis to-day;
But clouds which we cannot dispel may come,
And close it from our sight. E. Young.

It was in a private room at the Prince of Wales Inn that Granby Saville awaited the arrival of Madame Delaume.

It was fortunate for him that he was unaware of the relationship between them.

Had he done so, he would have been unable to resist the temptation of rushing at once to Milton Hall, and throwing himself into his mother's arms.

Waiters going and coming along the quiet corridors of the inn must have imagined that those doors enclosed a madman, for he paced to and fro with the strides of a caged lion, and every now and then, throwing open the window, looked out into the cold night.

Every time a footstep passed along the dusky road

he rushed eagerly to the casement; but it was not until eight in the evening that a waiter knocked at the door and announced that a lady wished to see him.

"Let her come up at once," said Granby, eagerly.

The waiter descended.

"If that ere were a young woman, now," he murmured as he did so, "I could understand his being in such a state of excitement. But, for a mercy! she's old enough to be his mother."

The latter fact, however, did not prevent Thomas from politely ushering the stranger up the stairs into the room.

Had Madame Delaume yielded to her first impulse she could have rushed forward and flung herself into Granby Saville's arms.

But her hope was strong.

She firmly believed that the day would come when she would be able to claim him openly, before the world, as her child, and she had strength, therefore, to wait.

She came quietly into the room, therefore, and sat down.

Her veil was down.

He could not, therefore, see the working of her features.

"Madam," he said, "you must really excuse my giving you this trouble; but I have lost the only one who could have assisted me—John Shadow is dead!"

Had that veil been drawn up at this moment, Saville would have trembled at the effect of his words.

A greenish pallor overspread her features.

Her eyes seemed to sink in her head, and her lips quivered spasmodically.

"Dead!" she echoed; "dead!"

"Yes, madam," said Saville; "he was drowned amid the wreck of the Ocean Mail."

And, at the very moment that he was saying these words, John Shadow was sitting in the train, looking out upon the snow.

"Dead!" she muttered again. "Then all hope is gone."

He did not hear her.

"I have sent for you, madam," he said, "because, when I saw you last, you recognized me by some mark on my arm. This you could not have done unless you knew me and my family well. Doubtless, you can prove my identity without the aid of John Shadow."

Madame Delaume was rocking herself to and fro by the fire.

She seemed a prey to violent agitation.

This agitation was unaccountable to Granby Saville.

"You seem moved, madam," he said. "I trust my words have not distressed you."

Madame Delaume made a violent effort to be calm, and said:

"There are a few things I must explain to you. You are aware that Mrs. Conyers was wrongfully accused by John Shadow, of being unfaithful to her husband. I say wrongfully, because I swear to you, that never, in deed or in thought, was she, for one moment, unfaithful."

Her voice trembled, so that for a moment she was unable to speak.

Granby Saville took this opportunity of saying:

"And what was John Shadow's motive for accusing her?"

"His motive was viler than the accusation itself."

He made proposals to her, which she rejected with scorn. He took advantage of his position as secretary, to annoy and persecute her, until, in the fulness of her indignation, she threatened to complain to her husband, and have him expelled the house. Fool that she was, not to have done this before! He was beforehand with her, and when she was about to carry out her threat, she found her husband's mind poisoned against her. All her prayers—all her protestations, were in vain. Useless was it that the gentleman who was accused of having abused the rights of hospitality swore that she was a faithful wife. Mrs. Conyers was under a fatal influence, and his outraged and indignant wife left his house."

She could not say "for ever."

Granby Saville listened with breathless interest.

Each word she spoke seemed to be a relic of his mother.

"And is she dead?" he asked, a wild hope springing up in his breast, "or was that also a lie of Shadow's?"

"She did not die at Merton, as he said!" cried she with a firmer voice, "she lived on in sorrow, and fear, and hope, until at length she heard that, believing her dead, her husband had married again. Then she conceived a strange scheme in her mind. She persuaded a friend of hers, one whom she had met in her lonely wanderings, to introduce her to Mrs. Conyers, as she was falsely called, as a lady born in Guadeloupe, who desired to secure a comfortable home by becoming

governess to some children of tender age. Mr. Conyers received her into his family as governess, the dark skin she had assumed enabled her to play her part well, and he never once suspected her.

Granby trembled violently.

His hope, then, did not deceive him.

He interrupted her.

"What is that you are telling me? Who, then, are you?"

She threw back her veil.

The dark skin—the wrinkles—the dark hair—all were gone.

In their stead a fair, brilliant, smooth complexion—sunny, auburn curls, beneath whose shade the blue eyes glistened with more natural lustre.

"I mean, Ralph," she said, "that Madame Delaume exists no longer. I am she—I am your mother."

He had never once suspected her of wrong, or of wrong intention.

Even if he had, the joy at thus recovering her would have quenched all other feeling.

He sprang forward, knelt before her, and buried his face in her lap.

"Mother—dear mother!" he murmured.

More he could not say.

Joy such as his was at that moment cannot be expressed—cannot be described.

After the first burst of emotion was over, Granby (or, as he must now be called Ralph Conyers,) said, holding her hands in his:

"Why, dear mother, have you delayed all this time? Why did you not long ago disclose yourself to the marquis?"

Laura shook her head.

"Ah, Ralph!" she said, "I was, and am now, powerless. Unless John Shadow chooses to confess to your father my innocence, it would be useless—nay, dangerous, to disclose my secret. No—no; we must bide our time."

Ralph started.

What could she mean?

Was her brain wandering that she talked of biding her time, when John Shadow was dead?

"My dear mother," he said, "John Shadow is dead. Of what avail will it be to bide our time?"

Laura smiled.

She parted his hair off his brow, and looked down upon him proudly.

"My son!" she said; "when you first spoke to me of John Shadow's death, you filled me with alarm. But now that I have reflected upon it, I am convinced that he is not dead. I believe in a Providence, and I can never conceive that that man has been suffered to pass away from this world after having wrought so much evil, without being compelled to make reparation also."

Granby shook his head sadly.

Then he drew the paper from his pocket, and handed it to her, saying:

"My words are not unsupported by proof, you perceive. I fear it is too true."

She read the paper calmly.

It seemed to have little effect upon her.

At any rate it produced no visible emotion.

Neither did it appear to change her fixed idea.

"Truly!" she said; "the Ocean Mail may have gone down with all on board, and among the passengers might have been John Shadow. Yet, if one man has been saved, be assured that he is that man. I hope and trust that he is not dead, for if he is, there is no one in the world who can prove to the marquis my innocence. We must still, then, wait and hope."

"And is my father inclined to receive me, think you, or does he believe that he who lies in the vaults yonder is his son?"

"No—no; he believes that he was an imposter—he trusts that you are not, and would, I am sure, be glad to welcome you. But remember one thing, if I were to go to him now, and say that I had discovered for him his son, or reveal to him who I am, he would have no confidence in me, and would, doubtless, believe I was deceiving him for some evil purpose. We must wait a little time—no doubt Providence will order it so that our suspense shall not be of long duration. Meanwhile, my dear child, are you in want of anything which I can give you?"

Granby thought a moment.

What could she do to help him?

What could she have with which to assist him out of his sea of trouble?

"No," he said, "I fear you cannot help me."

She smiled.

"You do not know," she said, "what means I may have of helping you. Tell me your story: tell me what has happened to you, since you arrived in England. Perhaps I may be able to get you out of your trouble."

He told her.

She listened attentively.

Only when Clara Mansfield's name was mentioned did her cheeks blanch, and her lips tremble.

When he had finished, she patted his head, (he was still sitting at her feet) patted it as if instead of being a man of thirty years, he were once more a child, and drawing from her pocket a cheque-book, said:

"Give me pen ink, and paper, Ralph."

He obeyed.

He had no conception what she was about to do.

She sat down by the table, and, opening the book, wrote a cheque, and handed it to him.

It was a cheque for two thousand pounds, and was signed, "Helene Delaume."

Granby gazed at it in unfeigned astonishment and delight, and for a moment was unable to speak.

She smiled at his embarrassment.

"What you refused from Marston Grey," she said, "you must not refuse from your mother. You have need of all your energies, and these money matters must not be allowed to prey upon your mind, and cramp your movements."

"But, how, dear mother," he cried, "how are you possessed of such a sum?"

"Oh! that is nothing, dear Ralph. I have much more still than that. When I left your father, he touched not my private fortune; and when I was supposed to be dead, he never troubled himself to discover what I had done with it. I made it over at my pretended death to one Helene Delaume, an imaginary person, of course; but until this moment I have had scarcely any use for any of it. Pay your debts, now, Ralph, and be assured that time will bring us all we can hope and desire. My heart tells me that John Shadow is not dead. I have saved the marquis many times from a terrible fate, and he is now in the enjoyment of perfect health. We have everything before us, consequently, to make us happy. I had better leave you now. You will, I suppose, proceed to London and clear yourself. When you return let me know at once. I may have much to tell you."

He conducted her down stairs, and walked with her as far as the railway station.

When they were approaching the door she stopped him.

"Do not come further," she said; "my face is known to the railway guards, and you being with me might excite suspicion."

He stooped down and kissed her cold lips, saying: "Good night. God bless you, mother. I trust in Heaven to release us soon from our trouble."

He hesitated.

He evidently had more to say, yet feared to give it utterance.

At length, just as he turned to go, he added:

"Clara is with you, is she not?"

A dark cloud gathered over Laura's features, but in the darkness he saw it not.

"Yes," she said, "Miss Mansfield is at the hall. But dream not of her, my son. She is a woman whose dark soul would make her a fit mate with John Shadow. Good night—may Heaven guard you."

Then she went.

Ralph gazed after with overflowing eyes.

"Dear, angel mother," he murmured; "may God protect and bless her, and give her happiness in her last years. What trials—what sufferings—what heart-burnings must she not have endured during all these long years of mystery and fear, and sorrow—long years, during which she has waited for me, and suffered for my sake. Dear mother! what love on earth is equal to your devotion?"

It was with a light step that he retraced his way to the "Theatre Royal."

Yet, when he reached the threshold, and was about to enter, he paused suddenly.

A cloud came over his heart.

How could he feel joy—pure, unadulterated joy—when those with whom fortune had brought him so strangely in contact were immersed in a sea of sorrow?

A bright thought crossed his mind.

"This really antiquary," thought he, "cares only for his money, and with the money my mother has given me, I can pay him, and release the old man and his daughter from their fear."

Oh, youth, youth!

Ready art thou, at any moment, to call the bright blossoms of hope in the very face of despair!

How little art thou prepared to meet the dark tomorrow which may follow each smiling to-day!

Meanwhile, Laura, with a heart full of joy and hope, also made her way back towards Milton Hall.

Something seemed to tell her that John Shadow was not dead, and as this idea was firmly rooted in her mind, all other obstacles seemed to sink into insignificance.

She had, as I have said, doffed her disguise, and it was necessary for her, therefore, to enter the place cautiously, lest she should be surprised by any of the domestics.

From the house to the edge of Thornton Wood,

there stretched, it will be remembered, a broad avenue, unshaded by trees of any kind.

This it would have been unsafe to traverse.

She therefore chose one of the lesser avenues skirting the grounds, and thus found herself approaching that part of the mansion in which the Marquis of Castleton slept.

It was now eleven o'clock.

The marquis retired at ten.

His chamber was now buried in profound darkness.

Suddenly, in the corridor leading to it, appeared a light.

Laura watched it.

It advanced slowly, as if the person who bore it were approaching the room with the utmost caution.

Then it entered the chamber of the marquis, where it appeared to be shaded by a person's hand.

In the chamber it remained for some moments, and then it again proceeded along the corridor, more rapidly than before, and was then suddenly extinguished.

Laura trembled, and a chill invaded her heart.

"There is some evil brewing here," she murmured. "While I have been absent, Lady Isabel must have again been at her work."

She entered the house noiselessly, and crept into her room.

For a time all was quiet in the house; then there was a confused murmur of voices, and after awhile she heard a knock at the door, and Jacob Messenger burst into the room.

His looks were wild and haggard, and for a moment he could not utter a word.

Laura seized his arm.

"Speak—speak, man!" she cried; "what in Heaven's name has happened?"

"The marquis is dead!" he exclaimed, in a gasping voice; "poisoned—murdered! and Lady Isabel has accused you!"

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

SOMETHING FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHERS.—In consequence of a prize having been offered in France for the invention of a substitute for albumen prepared from hens' eggs, an albumen equal in quality, and much cheaper, has been discovered, which is made from fish-roe.

THE WATER OF THE DEAD SEA.—A French gentleman, M. Roux, publishes a paper on the composition of the water of the Dead Sea, showing that it contains about 94 per cent. of the chloride of magnesium, 6 per cent. of chloride of sodium, 3 per cent. of chloride of calcium, 1½ per cent. of chloride of potassium, and traces of bromide of magnesium, sulphate of lime, hydrochlorate of ammonia, carbonate of lime, oxide of iron, alumina, and 79½ per cent. of pure water.

TRIAL OF AN ALPINE LOCOMOTIVE AT WHALEY BRIDGE.

An interesting trial of a locomotive engine, built upon novel principles at the Canada Works, Birkenhead, took place on Tuesday week, at Whaley Bridge, on the Cromford and High Peak Railway, and upon a short line made especially for the experiment.

The engine is constructed to ascend and descend steep gradients, to pass sharp curves, and to perform work which locomotives as yet have never been able to accomplish.

The inventor and patentee, Mr. J. B. Fell, has gone upon the principle of obtaining increased adhesion without increase of weight. In the centre of the carriage-way a raised rail, considerably larger than on the ordinary lines, is laid down, and the engine is fitted with horizontal wheels, which by pressing on either side of the central rail, produces the adhesion necessary for working upon steep inclines.

The practical object of this invention cannot but be greatly interesting, inasmuch as it proposes to run a line of railway for passengers, mails, and merchandise, over the very heart of the Alps, and along a road hitherto considered impassable for locomotives.

It is the well-known military road hewn out of such giant difficulties by the First Napoleon that it is thus contemplated to traverse. At present there is a tract of mountain-pass 48 miles in length between the two great railway systems of France and North Italy, the terminus of the former being San Michel, in Savoy, and the latter Suze, in Piedmont.

The Mont Cenis, by which this district is known, has been considered so important for purposes of traffic, that the French and Italian Governments five years ago commenced the excavation of a tunnel, to remove the difficulties so often felt. At the lowest computation, this great undertaking will take twelve years to complete.

The proposed railway over the surface of the pass will only be two years in making, and the projectors

would therefore have ten years of working before the tunnel was available for traffic.

The district has been thoroughly surveyed by Mr. Fell, in connection with a company of well-known English capitalists and contractors, and the scheme has met with the approbation of the Italian Government.

The present road is sufficiently wide to accommodate the railway, and leave room for local traffic, and the usual engineering labours of tunnelling, &c., will not be required. The chief difficulty, however, is that which the new locomotive is especially designed to overcome—namely, the excessive steepness.

Starting from San Michel, the road gradually rises as far as the village of Lanalebourg, whence it takes a rapid ascent, with gradients of one in twelve, to the summit of the pass, which is 7,000ft. above the level of the sea. From this point there is an equally rapid descent to Suze. In addition to this rising and falling, there are frequent sharp curves.

It is proposed to cover in those portions of the line where it is known avalanches and snowdrifts fall. The locomotive to be employed here is, in fact, a double engine, a horizontal and vertical engine combined, and so arranged that it may be worked either together or separate, according to the steepness of the incline.

Not the least feature of this invention is the safety which it insures. The horizontal wheels referred to above facilitate the passage of curves, enable the driver to stop the engine in the middle of the steepest gradient, give a propulsive pressure of several tons, and, by means of the flanges which underlie the centre rail, render it nearly impossible that the carriages can be overturned.

The brakes are extremely powerful, and, as they are attached to each carriage, no danger can arise from a coupling chain giving way. The extreme narrowness of the gauge renders the curves less difficult to pass, gives more room for the public road, and greatly assists in erecting the covered ways for the more dangerous parts.

The trials on Tuesday were in every way successful, and for once the High Peak proved an aid rather than an obstacle to the engineer. There were two inclines, the first being 200 yards long, at a gradient of 1 in 18, and the other 550 yards long, at a gradient of 1 in 12, with curves of about two chains radius. This represents the most difficult part of the Mont Cenis road.

The shortness of the line upon which the experiment was made prevented the full getting up of steam, and the trial may, therefore, be taken as a fair test. The locomotive itself, weighing 16 tons, but with an adhesion equivalent to 32 tons, first ascended and descended the line, stopping in the middle, and going backwards and forwards as required with perfect ease. Four waggons, laden with 26 tons of ballast, were then attached, and the experiment was repeated with equally satisfactory results. It is proposed to work the Mont Cenis line at the average speed of twelve miles, thus performing the journey in from four to five hours. The number of passengers will not exceed 190—equivalent to 24 tons.

Within the past week many of the principal engineers of the country have witnessed these experiments under the personal direction of Mr. Fell; and the novelty of an engine and waggons running easily and safely up and down a hill which would make the most courageous "whip" look twice before he risked himself and horses by venturing down, is belied by crowds of gaping and awe-struck rustics, who seem to doubt whether it is prudent or not to believe the evidence of their own eyes.

The London and North-Western Railway Company have liberally given to Mr. Fell the use of their line, and afforded other facilities for the trial of the new locomotive.

ECONOMY OF FUEL—SMELTING IRON.—A correspondent communicates on the waste of coal used for smelting iron, and ridicules the construction of the common smelting furnaces; asserting that they are worthy of the days of Tubal Cain, who lived five thousand years ago. He states that two-and-a-half tons of coal are employed to reduce one ton of iron from the ore, while one ton ought to be sufficient if properly managed. He confesses to a want of precise information respecting the art of smelting iron ore, but suggests that a saving of fuel might be effected with the use of the blow-pipe.

SCIENTIFIC JOTTINGS.—The island called l'Etag de Diane, near the eastern coast of Corsica, is exclusively composed of oyster-shells mixed up with the remains of certain other molluscs which are not edible. There is a tradition in the country, according to which the island at the time of the Romans carried on a brisk trade with the continent in pickled oysters, and all the shells were thrown into the sea at that spot. Whether this be true or not, certain it is that in Denmark and other parts of the shores of the Baltic there are similar accumulations of sea-shells, all considered

o be the work of human hands; nay, Professor Wornes and Steenstrap are clearly of opinion that they date from the first inhabitants of Europe, whom they take to have been contemporary with the great mammals, such as the *Elephas primigenius*, which many geologists still persist in considering as much anterior to the human race.

A French physician is said to have removed a cancerous tongue from a man, and substituted one made of gutta-percha, which enables him to talk!

THERE is another reason why faults or even weak places must not be admitted in submarine lines; it is that they are so liable to injury through lightning. In the Channel Islands telegraph, the lightning struck the cable in Jersey, and passing under the sea along the wire for sixteen miles in the direction of Guernsey, met with a weak place, where it burnt itself through into the water, destroying the insulation.

GREEK FIRE OR PYROPHORI.

CHEMISTS are acquainted with several substances which take fire when exposed to the air; they are termed pyrophori or fire-bearers.

The liquid bodies, alkalis and cacodyl, poured from a vial into the air, spontaneously take fire and burn with a white flame, the very smoke from which is deadly poisonous. These deadly pyrophori would appear as though they had been pumped up from a well near the river Styx. There are also pyrophori of a grain or powder form: one of these is made by roasting acetate or sugar of lead in a close vessel, the other from alum and flour in the same way. We may keep them bottled up in safety, but only let the air come in contact, and they become "on fire."

The exigencies of modern war have added to their number, and one in particular so dangerous and so inflammable, that it has been compared to the Greek fire, with which the Byzantine twice delivered Constantinople from the sieges of the Arabs and Saracens, more than eleven hundred years ago.

The ancient Greek fire is said to have been invented by one Callinicus, a native of Heliopolis, in Syria; its composition was held as a state secret.

The art of making it was preserved at Constantinople as the palladium of the state. All the weapons of war might occasionally be lent to the allies at Rome but the composition of the Greek fire was concealed with the most jealous scruple, and the terror of the enemies was increased and prolonged by their ignorance and surprise.

A knight, who despised the swords and lances of the Saracens, relates with heartfelt sincerity his own fears and that of his companions, at the sight and sound of the engines that discharged a torrent of fire.

The composition of it is now pretty well known to be naphtha, sulphur, bitumen and most probably nitre. Vast quantities of naphtha or petroleum abound between the Tigris and the Caspian Sea; sulphur must have been common at Rome on account of the proximity to Sicily, where it is mined, and nitre is a natural efflorescence on the shores of the Dead Sea. Chemistry was most assiduously studied in Egypt, so that, taking into consideration that the natural products of the earth almost put into the hands of Callinicus the necessary materials, we are not surprised that, with his alchemical skill the terrible warlike was compounded.

Yet if the brave and warlike Saracens were affrighted from their enthusiasm by this fire, which after all bears no comparison to the effect which a bombshell charged with gunpowder can produce, what would they have imagined if they could have seen the modern pyrophori? It will be seen that we are acquainted with bodies in the form of powder or grain which become fired when in contact with air; but we are now introduced to a true liquid fire, which, dashed over anything, spreads itself like water, then in a few minutes of insidious attraction and evaporation, bursts into a flame in every part! This liquid is a solution of phosphorus in disulphide of carbon, which can be almost as easily and cheaply made as gunpowder. Disulphide of carbon, a transparent spirit-like liquid, was discovered by one Lambadius, as far back as 1796. The making of phosphorus at a very cheap rate dates within a very recent period; the combination of these two bodies has resulted from the demands of the present war.

We are inclined to be political in our remarks by observing that the more destructive the war agents are the shorter the war will be. The wars of the kings of Egypt, even of Charlemagne, fought without gunpowder, were almost interminable, whereas the wars with gunpowder have been of comparative short periods. The actual destruction of the soldier has been greater, but the quick decision has benefited the people, of the nations at war, at large. We, the people not engaged in war, have therefore everything to hope from modern discoveries, which will reduce the period of political wars from years to days. The phosphorised carbon, the Greek fire of to-

day, does not require to be ignited before it is thrown at an enemy, which was necessary with the fire of Callinicus. We have only to direct a shell full to the place desired—splash! The evaporation of the disulphide is rapid, leaving a thin coat of phosphorus—then all is flame.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO PRESERVE GRAPES.—Bunches of grapes may be preserved all through the winter by simply inserting the end of the stem in a potato of the size of a hen's egg. The bunches should then be laid on dry straw, and turned occasionally.

TO CLEAN TAPESTRY.—Shake, and clean it with a brush in the best manner, then rub in powdered chalk all over it, which leave on for a day or two; this brush out thoroughly, renew the chalk, and again beat and brush it all out of the tapestry. This is far better than using bran, which is sometimes recommended.

POWDER OF MILK.—The powder of milk, added to water, forms an agreeable drink, an excellent substitute for milk.—Milk, two pints; water, one ounce; sugar, one pound. This mixture is then to be gently heated and constantly stirred. When it is three-fourths evaporated, the sugar is to be gradually added, and the whole briskly stirred. After it is perfectly incorporated, the mixture is to be removed from the fire, poured into plates, and dried in an oven. When perfectly dry it is to be finely powdered, and kept in well-stopped bottles. One or two spoonfuls is sufficient for a cup of tea or coffee.

STATISTICS.

THE South Eastern Railway traffic return shows this week an increase of £18 over last year; and the Brighton a decrease of £146.

GRAIN AT LIVERPOOL.—The following is a statement of the estimated stock of grain, &c., at Liverpool, on the 31st of December last:—Wheat, 866,112 quarters; barley, 4,662; malt, 2,334; oats, 24,277; beans, 24,074; peas, 6,666; Indian corn, 191,323; oatmeal, 46,039 loads; flour, 84,930 sacks and 138,408 barrels.

THE BRITISH NAVY.—The total strength of the effective ships of the British navy, on the 1st January, was 975, of all classes, not including a number doing duty in the various harbours, both at home and abroad, the whole of which would be speedily converted into block ships for the defence of the coast, together with a numerous fleet of iron and wooden mortar boats laid up at Chatham. Of this number, there are 72 vessels ranking as line-of-battle ships, each mounting from 74 guns to 121 guns; 42 vessels, of from 60 guns to 74 guns each, 94 steamers and other ships, carrying an armament of from 22 to 46 guns each, and the majority of which are of a size and tonnage equivalent to line-of-battle ships; 25 screw corvettes, each carrying 21 guns, and 500 vessels, of all classes, including iron ships of great power and tonnage, carrying an armament of from four guns to 21 guns each. Exclusive of the above, there is a squadron of 185 screw gunboats, each mounting two Armstrong guns, and nearly the whole of which are fitted with high-pressure engines, each of 60 horse-power. The total number of ships of all classes in commission, and serving in nearly every part of the world, is upwards of 300, the remainder being attached to the reserve squadrons at the various naval ports, and partially equipped, in readiness to proceed to sea whenever their services may be required.

NAVAL AND MILITARY RESOURCES OF DENMARK.—The Danish army now in and about the Dannevirke position is under the command of Lieutenant-General de Meza, as commander-in-chief, and consists of three divisions of infantry under Generals Gerlach, Du Platt, and Steinmann, each consisting of six regiments of infantry, two field batteries, and three squadrons of light cavalry. The fourth, or cavalry division, is commanded by Lieutenant-General Hegerman-Lindencrone, and consists of four regiments of dragoons and three squadrons of hussars, with a field battery. The infantry reserve is commanded by General Caroe, and is composed of the remaining four regiments (Holsteiners.) Each regiment of infantry forms two battalions of four companies each, and the companies are, or will be, brought up to 250 men each. The cavalry regiments are each six squadrons, each of 100 men. The active army in the field would thus number—Infantry, 18 regiments of 2,000 each, 36,000; cavalry, six regiments of 600 each, 3,600; artillery, seven field batteries of 130 each, 910; total, 40,510. The naval squadron in commission consists of the Sjælland, screw, 44, 300 horse-power; Niels Juel, screw, 300 horse-power; Helmsdal, screw, 16, 260 horse-power; Thor, screw, 12, 260 horse-power; Heckla, paddle, 5, 200 horse-power; Geiser, paddle, 8

160 horse-power; Hertha, paddle, 2, 90 horse-power; Absolon, iron-clad screw, 3, 100 horse-power; Esbern Snare, iron-clad screw, 3, 100 horse-power; Krieger, screw gun-boat, 2, 70 horse-power; Marstrand, screw gun-boat, 2, 70 horse-power; Willemoes, screw gun-boat, 2, 70 horse-power.

ENGLISH STATISTICS.

It is worthy of remark that the very aged have not in the ten years 1851-1861, increased in near the same proportion as the general population. In 1851 there were in England 107,041 persons who had passed the limit of 'fourteen years;' in 1861 the number had only increased to 113,250. In 1851, 215 persons were returned as being above 100 years old, but only 201 persons in 1861—one in every 100,000. Of this last number 146 were women, and but 55 men—nearly three women to one man. Only 26 had never been married. About a third were found living in large towns—21 in London, 11 in Liverpool, 5 in Manchester, 1 in Birmingham, 4 in Bristol, 1 in Leeds.

As in 1851, so in 1861, these very aged persons were not found so often in the midland districts of the kingdom as in the north and the east, and most of all in the west. At the last census, Norfolk had among its 435,000 people 11 above 100 years old; Gloucestershire, with 485,000 people, had 8 centenarians; and Somerset, with its 445,000, had 9. Wales, with its 1,112,000, had no less than 24, the same number as Lancashire, with its 2,400,000 people, and more than London, with its 2,800,000 inhabitants.

So far as the occupation of these long-lived persons are given, the returns show a majority engaged in pursuits that caused them to be much in the open air. Three had been farmers, thirteen out-door farm-servants, five labourers, three hawkers, three seamen, three soldiers; there was a fisherman, a quarryer, a waterworks man, a miller. But there were also a scrivener, four shoemakers, a baker, a grocer, a carpenter, a marine-store dealer, three persons occupied in cotton manufacture, two in woollen, one in silk, one in lace.

Of the women the returns commonly state only whether the person is wife or widow, but we are told that there were six who had been domestic servants, two nurses, three charwomen, two washerwomen, and a gipsy. One centenarian was a member of the Household. Fourteen are described as land or house proprietors, or independent; nineteen were passing their last years in a workhouse. Six were blind.—"Knowledge for the Time." By John Timbs, F.S.A.

BLACKBERRIES IN JANUARY.—It is a remarkable fact that ripe blackberries are now frequently to be found in the hedge-rows in some parts of Devonshire, and the borders of Somerset. On the last day of the old year a youth called Nelder picked a very fine bunch of ripe blackberries on Exeter-hill; and on New Year's-day several blackberries and a fine bunch of ripe ones were also found in the hedge-rows near the Ottery-road Station of the South-Western Railway Company.

ANCIENT RELICS FOUND NEAR NEWSTEAD ABBEY.—There have just been discovered some very interesting relics near to Newstead Abbey, Notts (the seat of the late Lord Byron). They were found by labourers employed in making a new carriage-drive in the park. The relics consist of a portion of a statue, representing a warrior in the time of Henry III., as exhibited in the chain-mail of that period; an ancient freestone floor, probably part of an ambulatory; a great quantity of window tracing of the fourteenth century, and some small jamb shafts of the thirteenth century.

INDIAN MUSLIN.—It appears that the manufactures in Bengal were formerly incomparably finer than they are at present; there was a sort of muslin called Abroon, which was manufactured solely for the use of the emperor's seraglio, a piece of which costing 400 rupees, if spread upon wet grass, would have been scarcely visible. In the Nabob Alverdy Khawn's time, a weaver was chastised and turned out of the city of Dacca for his neglect, in not preventing his cow from eating up a piece of the same sort of muslin, which he had spread, and carelessly left, on the grass.

"THE SMITHS."—John Smith—plain John Smith—is not very high-sounding; it does not suggest aristocracy; it is not the name of any hero in die-away novels; and yet it is good, strong, and honest. Transferred to other languages it seems to climb the ladder of respectability. Thus in Latin it is *Johannes Smithus*; the Italian smooths it off into *Giovanni Smithi*; the Spaniards render it *Juan Smithus*; the Dutchman adopts it as *Hans Schmidt*; the French flatten it out into *Jean Smet*; and the Russian sneezes and barks *Jouloff Smittowski*. When John Smith gets into the tea-trade in Canton, he becomes *Johou Shimmit*; if he chambers about Mount Hecia, the low-

landers say he is John Smithson; if he trades among the Tuscaroras, he becomes Ton-Qa-Smithia; in Poland he is known as Ivan Schmittiwski; should he wander among the Welsh mountains, they talk of Jihon Schmid; when he goes to Mexico he is booked as Jontli F'Smitti; if of classic turn he flings among Greek ruins, he turns to Hen-Smitken; and in Turkey he is utterly disguised as Yoe-Seef.

FACETIE.

MARRYING A GARDENER.—An English writer says, in his advice to young married women, that their mother Eve married a gardener. It might be added that the gardener, in consequence of his match, lost his situation.

BREVITY.—"Whose house?" "Mog's." "Of what built?" "Logs." "Any neighbours?" "Progs." "What is the soil?" "Bogs." "The climate?" "Fogs." "Your diet?" "Hogs." "How do you catch them?" "Dogs."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BROKEN ENGLISH.—We learn from a country paper that a digger was summoned to the police-court for aying some cracked dinner-plates at a Chinaman's head. The defence of the accused was, that Mr. No-Savee had addressed him in broken English, and that he had merely answered him with broken China. Case dismissed.

SHE STILL HAD HOPES.

At a recent examination of a Scotch farmer, on his sister entering the box to be examined, the following conversation took place between her and the opposing agent:—

Agent: "How old are you?"

Miss Jane: "Oh, weel, sir, I am an unmarried woman; and I dinna think it richt to answer that question."

The Judge: "Oh, yus, answer the gentleman how old you are."

Miss Jane: "Weel, ah weel, I am fifty."

Agent: "Are you not more?"

Miss Jane: "Weel, I am sixty."

The inquisitive agent still further asked if she had hopes of getting married, to which Miss Jane replied:

"Weel, sir, I widna surely tell a lie; I hinna lost hope yet." And she scornfully added, "But I widna marry you, for I am sick an' tired o' your palaver already."

The examination then proceeded.

A GOOD EXCUSE.—An unwilling juryman recently excused himself from serving at the Queen's Bench, by a letter, of which the following is a literal copy:—"Sir, as I am a Fairrier and lengwich Danich I am not ettal compitint of the English lengwich to be a jewryman and my cautious do not allow me to geive my openen on what I do not undestan. An answer weel oblight."

A SUGGESTION FOR THE LAWYERS.—A cat is taken to sea, because insurers won't pay for damages by rats, else, and with the hope that pussy, if the vessel is wrecked, will save her from being confiscated to the queen, which is not done if there is a living thing on board. How about rats, and mice, and barnacles, which stick to the boards? Could not the lawyers be met with this quibble, as a quibble to them is as good as sound law?

"FRYING BACON."

The people of Grimsby are envious of the notice that the anecdote of the Mayor of Windsor has attracted, and say that an ancient Mayor of Grimsby was as worthy of note, who discovered a charter in which, as he interpreted it, "frying bacon" after sunset, without the authority of the mayor, was an offence against the municipal laws.

Now, his worship being anxious to vindicate the dignity and add to the importance of his office, sallied forth one night in company with the parish beadle, to detect and punish all offenders. After perambulating every nook and corner of the borough, they came to a thatched cottage on its precincts, in which they found a poor fellow who had just returned from a hard day's work, hungry and worn out in *fragrant delicta*, and immediately arrested the savoury morsel and assigned its cook to a supperless cell.

On the following morning his worship ordered the unfortunate wight to be brought before him.

"Sirrah," quoth he, "know you not that it is a grave offence against the ancient rights, laws, and customs of this ancient borough, to fry bacon after sunset?"

"Ho! ho! ho!" giggled forth the town clerk.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared out the audience.

"What means this indecent uproar?" shouted his worship, boiling over with rage; "by Heaven I'll commit you all for contempt of court!"

"Ho! ho! ho!" convulsively jerked out he of the

long robe; "if you please, your worship, it's a mistake."

"A mistake? I think it is a mistake; but I'll let you know that I am Mayor of Grimsby; and at this culminating crisis, Master Beadle, amidst the roars of the court, came to the rescue, and said that his worship had read the charter wrong, for that it was "firing a bacon," and not "frying bacon."

A WARD IN THE BOSOM OF HIS FAMILY.

My wife stood before the lookin' glass, a fustin' up her hair.

"What you doin', Betsy?" I inquired.

"Doin' up my back hair," she replied.

"Betsy," said I, with a stern air, "Betsy, you're too old to think about such frivolities as back hair."

"Too old, too old!" she screamed, "too old, you bald-headed idiot! You haint got hair enuff onto your head to make a decent wig for a single-breasted grasshopper!"

The rebuke was severe but merited. Henceforth I shall let my wife's back hair alone.

A SEVERE BABY JOKE.—A citizen of Jamaica, L. I., went to answer a ring at the door, at the request of his wife, where he found nothing but a basket. On removing carefully the cover, a beautiful child appeared, some five months old. The ladies screamed; one of the lady visitors took up the baby, and found a note pinned to its dress which charged the gentleman with being its father, and imploring him to support it. A rich scene ensued between the injured wife and indignant husband, the latter denying all knowledge of the little one, and asserting his innocence. The friends interfered, and at last the wife was induced to forgive her husband, though he stuck to it like a Trojan that he had always been a faithful husband. Finally, the lady very roughly told her husband it was strange he did not know his own child, for it was their mutual offspring, which had just been taken from the cradle for the purpose of playing the joke.

AMERICAN VALOUR.

An American telegram states that—
"Forrest had made a raid on the Memphis and Charleston Railway, but was driven away."

If this Forrest is a great, that is to say, a big actor who belloved at Drury Lane some years ago, and afterwards was supposed to have promoted an anti-Macready row in America, when several persons were killed, we cannot understand his being repulsed. He had only to shout, like Achilles, when—

"Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he raised,
And thrice they fled, confounded and amazed."

If the Federals could stand that, and drive him off, they are the brave fellows we believe a great many of them to be. His voice would have wakened the very railway sleepers.—*Punch*.

INTENSITY OF THE FROST.—An old lady in Fimlico declares that the other morning her milk was actually skimmed over.—*Pun*.

SENSELESS.—An old woman being asked what she liked best—oxygen, hydrogen, or nitrogen, said she liked London Gin better than any of them.

SINGING IN THE KITCHEN.

Wonderful are the wants one sees announced in newspapers! For instance only look at this:—

"Wanted, in a Clergyman's Family in the Country, a good Plain Cook, who understands Baking, with the usual branches of Cooking. A Churchman indispensable, and one that can Sing, preferred. Age between 30 and 40.—Address, &c."

Singing chambermaids, we know, are sometimes wanted for the stage, but we never before heard a wish to hire a singing cook. What sort of voice, we wonder, does this clergyman require? and what proficiency in singing is deemed needful in his kitchen? If his housemaid be soprano, he may possibly prefer a good contralto for his cook; then with a tenor for his footman, and his butler a deep bass, he might get up some delightful quartettes down below-stairs, and practise now and then an anthem for his church.

In making choice of a new cook, we suppose he lets the candidates all stand up in a row and sing a song, a piece; and then, after picking out the one whose voice most pleases him, we presume he next proceeds to ask her what she knows of cooking, and puts her through the catechism of the culinary art.—*Punch*.

TIMING DRINKS.—A minister in the Highlands of Scotland found one of his parishioners intoxicated. Next day, he called to reprove him. "It was wrong to get drunk," said the parson. "I ken that," said the guilty person, "but then I dinna driak as muckle as you do." "Why, sir, how is that?" "Why, gin it please ye, dinna ye ave take a glass o' whisky and water after dinner?" "Why, ye, Jimmy, sure I take a glass of whisky after dinner, merely to aid digestion." "And dinna ye take a glass o' whisky toddy

every night when ye are gangin' to bed?" "Ye, to be sure; I take a little toddy every night to help me sleep." "Well," continued the parishioner, "that's just fourteen glasses a week, and about sixty every month; and then if I'd take six glasses it would make me drunk for a week. Now ye see, the only difference is, that ye time it better than I."

HUNTING AND FISHING.—The Scotch are talking very big about their pearl-fishery just now, and lay stress on the fact of the pearls being pink. Our sporting contributor, Nicholas, laughs at the idea, and says he has seen many a pink puri in the hunting-field.—*Comic News*.

WILLIE'S DINNER.

Willie one day asked his mother just before dinner for a piece of gingerbread.

"No, my dear," she answered; "wait a little while until dinner is ready, and you will then have an appetite."

Dinner time came, and Willie was offered roast beef, but declined. Pudding? He didn't want that, either. Fruit?

"No, thank you, mamma."

"Why, Willie, I thought you were hungry," she said.

"So I am, mamma, but you promised me 'appetite' for dinner, and I am waiting till it comes."

COMPLIMENTARY TO PAPA.—Sister Amy: "My dear Rose, what are you doing? Mamma will be very angry." Rose: "Why, Walter wants to be like papa, so I'm just thinning his hair at the top."

STEAM—BNAK REEUE.

What is to become of us? We shall all be turned out of London soon, to make room for the railroads. Here's a paragraph to set one thinking:—

"The annihilation of the three parishes of St. Olave, St. John, and St. Thomas, in Southwark, for parochial, but not ecclesiastical, purposes, has been determined on. By the great extension of railways in the district, not less than 200 houses have been taken down, and only 55 houses left standing in St. Thomas's. The almost entire removal of the parishioners, and the demolition of St. Thomas's Hospital, having rendered the parish church almost useless, it will be taken down."

At present, the "devouring element," as steam must be dubbed henceforth, is confined to the other side of the water. But the smothering of the dragon makes itself heard on the City side, and will make itself visible—painfully visible—are long on Ludgate Hill. It has already eaten its way under the New Road, through Belgrave, and over Whitechapel. We shall all be turned out of house and home, and become vagrants, doing as the old song says, "Sitting on a rail" for the rest of our mortal lives. The locomotive is making locomotives of us and triumphs in a *succes d'est-eu*.—*Pun*.

SENSE AND NOISE.—Boswell complained to Johnson that the noise of the company the day before had made his head ache. "No, sir, it was not the noise that made your head ache. It was the sense we put in it," said Johnson. "Has sense that effect upon the head?" inquired Boswell. "Yes, sir," was the reply, "on heads that are not used to it."

SHOCKING DESTRUCTION.—A well-known scientific man, some years since, found himself annoyed by boys, who rang his door-bell and ran away. So the doctor ground out a heavy charge of electricity, led a wire to the door-bell knob, and sat down to wait. Shortly there was a horrible howl, and a falling backward down the front steps. The boy was half-murdered by the shock—and the doctor's troubles from that source were definitely ended.

A STORY is told of a clergyman who was very fond of shooting, and used to take his clerk to mark for him. One first of September he had been out for an hour or two, but was obliged to return to his church "to make a couple tappy!" so putting his surplus over his shooting-coat, he commenced the ceremony. As he proceeded, one of the birds in his pocket revived, and struggling out of his pocket, flew to the other end of the church. Being rather taken aback, he stopped, when his old clerk said, "All right, sir, you can go on, for I have marked him down in the gallery!"

"WELL, GOOD-BYE, SIR."

A country gentleman lately arrived at Boston, and immediately repaired to the house of a relative, a lady who had married a merchant of that city. The parties were glad to see him, and invited him to make their house his home, as he declared his intention of remaining in that city only a day or two. The husband of the lady, anxious to show his attention to a relative and friend of his wife, took the gentleman's horse to a livery stable.

Finally his visit became a visitation, and the merchant, found, after the lapse of eleven days, besides lodging and boarding the gentleman, a pretty considerable bill had run up at the livery stable. At

cordingly he went to the man who kept the livery stable and told him when the gentleman took his horse he would pay the bill.

"Very well," said the stable-keeper, "I understand you."

Accordingly, in a short time, the country gentleman went to the stable and ordered his horse to be got ready. The bill, of course, was presented to him.

"Oh," said the gentleman, "Mr. —, my relative, will pay this."

"Very good, sir," said the stable-keeper, "please get an order from Mr. —; it will be the same as money."

The horse was put up again, and down went the country gentleman to the wharf which the merchant kept.

"Well," said he, "I am going now."

"Are you?" said the gentleman, "Well, good-bye, sir."

"Well, about my horse; the man said the bill must be paid for his keeping."

"Well, I suppose that is all right, sir."

"Yes—well, but you know I'm your wife's cousin."

"Yes," said the merchant, "I know you are, but your horse is not."

POERS FOR PRACTICAL PRINTERS.—If you print a job in blue ink, how can it be read? Suppose you print a form of letter; in such a "case," is it not very likely that you will get into the wrong box? If you are out of sorts, is that any reason why you should lose your temper?

SIGNS AND TOKENS.—The following signs are infallible:—If you see a man and woman, with little or no occasion, often finding fault and correcting each other in company, you may be sure they are husband and wife.

If you see a lady and gentleman in the same carriage, in profound silence, the one looking out of one window, and the other at the opposite side, be assured they mean no harm to each other, but are merely husband and wife.

If you see a lady accidentally let fall a handkerchief or glove, and a gentleman that is next to her tell her of it, that she may herself pick it up, set them down for husband and wife.

If you see a lady whose beauty attracts the attention of everyone present, except one man, and he speaks to her in a rough manner, and does not appear at all affected by her charms, depend upon it, they are husband and wife.

If you see a male and female constantly thwarting each other, under the appellations of "my dear," "my love," &c., rest assured they are man and wife.

HUMAN NATURE.

Some wise person sagely remarked "There is a good deal of human nature in man." It drops out occasionally in boys.

One of the urchins in the school, who was quite sick, was visited by a kind lady. The little fellow was suffering acutely, and his visitor asked him if she should do anything for him.

"Yes," replied the patient, "read to me."

"Will you have a story?" asked the lady.

"No," answered the boy; "read from the Bible; read about Lazarus;" and the lady complied.

The next day the visit was repeated, and again the boy asked the lady to read.

"Shall I read from the Bible?" she inquired.

"Oh, no," was the reply, "I am better to-day, read me a love-story."

HARD SWARING.—The workmen in a certain foundry, who appear to think they can do no hard work without a corresponding amount of profanity, were lately very busily engaged at their Vulcanic and volcanic double labour, and making oaths cheaper than oats and more exciting, when they noticed the entrance of a grave and quiet old gentleman, with a hammer-handle in his hand. He said nothing, but went peering round the benches, and over the floor, and about the forges, so earnestly, that the blasphemers wondered, and one of them hailed him with: "Hallo! you old rat, what are you now mousing after?" "I have lost the head of my hammer," was the meek reply; and as I was going by, I heard so much hard swearing; I thought I would just step in and pick up one of the heaviest oaths, and put a handle to it."

WISCONSIN ELOQUENCE.

A lawyer in Milwaukee was defending a handsome young woman, accused of stealing from a large unoccupied dwelling in the night-time, and thus he spoke in conclusion:

"Gentlemen of the jury, I am done. When I gaze with enraptured eyes on the matchless beauty of this peerless virgin, on whose resplendent charms suspicion never dared to breathe—when I behold her radiant in this glorious bloom of lustrous loveliness, which angelic sweetness might envy but could not eclipse—before which the star on the brow of the night grows pale, and the diamonds of Brazil are

—and then reflect upon the utter madness and folly of supposing that so much beauty would expose itself to the terrors of an empty building, in the cold, damp dead of the night, when innocence like hers is hiding itself amid the snowy pillows of repose; gentlemen of the jury, my feeling are too overpowering for expression, and I throw her into your arms for protection against this foul charge, which the outrageous malice of a disappointed scoundrel has invented to blast the fair name of this lovely maiden, whose smile shall be the reward of the verdict which I know you will give!"

The jury acquitted her, without leaving their seats.

FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS.—How many common figurative expressions in our language are borrowed from the art of carpentry, may be seen in the following sentence:—"The lawyer who filed a bill, shaved a note, cut an acquaintance, split a hair, made an entry, got up a case, framed an indictment, empanelled a jury, put them into a box, bored a whole court, all in one day, has since laid down law, and turned carpenter."

WINTER BIRDS.

NAME me the birds that dare to sing

When wintry tempests blow,—

When ruffian winds will challenge fling,

And ice to the streamlet cling,

And check its merry flow.

The robin,—with his kindling breast?

The thrush,—musician rare?

The martin bold and shrill of note?

The blackbird with his tireless note?

Sing they, when trees are bare?

No, no—their favourite haunts are lone—

Their warbling strains are still—

They are all gone,—they might not stay,

To meet stern winter's iron way,—

Ah! what their place can fill?

Upon their radiant wing we muse

Beside our wintry hearth,

While dreary snows their banners toss,—

What can console us for the loss

Of melody and mirth?

The unselfish deed, the gentle word,

The smile that lights the eye,—

Warm sympathy for want and pain

True friendship invoked in vain,

Pure love, that cannot die:

These build a green bower in the heart,

Though every branch is riven,—

These have no winter in their breast,—

But gladly from a lowly nest

Strike the soul's key-tone, sweet and blest,

And sing like birds of heaven.

L. H. S.

GEMS.

THE STRENGTH OF FOOLS.—There are none can baffle men of sense but fools; on whom they can make no impression.

A DIFFICULTY.—It is easier to pretend what you are not, than to hide what you really are; but he that can accomplish both, has little to learn in hypocrisy.

SAYING AND DOING.—People frequently use this expression—"I am inclined to think so and so;" not considering that they are then speaking the most literal of all truths.

VALUE OF A GARDEN.—Nothing teaches patience like a garden. You may go round and watch the opening bud from day to day; but it takes its own time, and you cannot urge it on faster than it will.

THE MORAL BUSINESS OF A MAN.—The ingratitude of mankind is sometimes alleged as an excuse for neglecting good offices; but it is the business of a man to perform his own part, not to answer for the returns which others may, or may not be disposed to make.

ADVERSITY.—He that has never known adversity is but half-acquainted with others, or with himself. Constant success shows us but one side of the world; for, as it surrounds us with friends who will tell us only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone we can learn our defects.

A WISE MAXIM.—Be very slow to believe that you are wiser than all others; it is a fatal but common error. Where one has been saved by a true estimation of another's weakness, thousands have been destroyed by a false appreciation of their own strength.

YOUTH AND MANHOOD.—When young, we trust ourselves too much, and we trust others too little when old. Rashness is the error of youth, timid caution of age. Manhood is the isthmus between the two ex-

tremes; the ripe and fertile season of action, when alone we can hope to find the head to coöperate, united with the hand to execute.

PRIDE.—Men are sometimes accused of pride, merely because their accusers would be proud themselves, if they were in their places.

MISCELLANEOUS.

EARLY FRUITS AND FLOWERS.—On Christmas-day, in the neighbourhood of Exeter, primroses, white strawberries, and a number of spring and summer wild flowers, were gathered in the hedgerows.

A GREEK, named Samiotti, has just died at Trieste, at the advanced age of 102. This is the third individual who died there in the course of 1863 at the age of 100 and upwards.

A SNAKE of the carpet species was killed at the Myall, a short time since, measuring seventeen feet eight inches; it is said the head was nearly as large as a dog's.

SHOEBLACK BRIGADES.—The total earnings of the 873 boys of the eight shoeblick brigades, during the past year, amount to £6,226, giving an average of sixteen guineas a-head.

THE FORTIFICATIONS OF CORFU.—Letters received in Trieste, from Corfu, state the dismantling of the fortifications has already commenced. The cannon of the fort commanding the harbour were dismounted and taken away on the 28th December.

IRON PLATES.—So great are now the facilities for the manufacture of iron plates, that Messrs. Brown, of Sheffield, have contracted to deliver the armour required for the Lord Warden, amounting to 1,000 tons, by the end of next March.

A PERSON in public company accusing the Irish nation with being the most unpolished in the world, was mildly answered by an Irish gentleman, "that it ought to be otherwise, for the Irish met with hard rubs enough to polish any nation upon earth."

BLOODHOUNDS.—The system of running bloodhounds in search of a criminal is in full favour in the Yorkshire wolds just now. The farmers are advertising for bloodhounds, in order to try if they will be any more successful than the police in finding out the East Riding incendiaries.

SERVANTS AND MISTRESSES.

THE faults of servants are, in the main, also the faults of their employers. Excessive love of dress is constantly brought forward, and no doubt servants do waste money and thought upon it to a shocking degree. But how about the mistresses? Do they ever talk to their servants with genuine interest on any other subject? Does it not at least appear to be of the first importance in their eyes?

Daintiness in food is another of the crimes of servants. But while they are waiting at the table, what is the theme of their master's discourse? Is not the appearance of a tough joint or an ill-seasoned dish considered a sufficient justification for a perfect storm of indignation? What sort of notion must cooks have of what is essential to the happiness of men?

Servants are too fond of gossip. Is the conversation of "the parlour" so very much higher in quality than that of the kitchen? Idleness is another of the stock accusations. Do many of us work at all harder than we are obliged?

Telling stories is, we believe, almost universal among servants. Perhaps in this respect, also, we do not set the very best example possible. The petty deceptions, the incessant efforts to appear richer than we are, which servants know all about, and which, indeed, it is part of their business to carry out, fill our households with an atmosphere of deceit, in the last degree destructive of the habit of truthfulness.

We may add that the habits of both masters and mistresses before marriage are seldom calculated to prepare them for the not very easy task of directing a household. Men are accustomed to be exacting and inconsiderate of the comfort and convenience of others; women, unmethodical, unused to authority, and often wholly destitute of the capacity for administration which is essential to the order and good government of even a small establishment.—*Victoria Magazine*.

FRENCH LIFEBOATS.—Owing to the great loss of life and property on the coast of France during the late gales, the French Government are at length taking active steps to establish lifeboats on the coast. The Minister of Marine is in communication with the National Lifeboat Society in London, who have offered their cordial assistance, and if necessary, to send one of their most experienced inspectors to France. It is a fact, that over more than 1,000 miles of coast there are not at present more than half-a-dozen lifeboats. It appears it is Admiral Paria of the Imperial Navy, who has drawn the attention of his Government to the subject.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Cremus, King of Lydia: a Tragedy in Five Acts. By MAJOR RICHARDS. London: Longmans and Co.—This is an admirable tragedy. It is written with great lingual force, and displays high poetical power and originality. The language recalls the style of some of the elder dramatists who were wont to stir the English heart as doth the sound of a trumpet. The story is taken from Herodotus, and may thus be epitomized. Adrastus is the son of Gobrius and the grandson of Midas; and having unintentionally slain his brother, he takes refuge in the Court of Cremus, where he receives protection. Whilst enjoying the hospitality of the Lydian monarch, he is, unfortunately, the immediate cause of the death of Atya. This is the son of Cremus, who, in a boat-hunt, has inadvertently been slain. That this was to happen, and by a spear or sharp point of iron, was fore-shadowed to Cremus in a dream, and notwithstanding the accident, he pardons Adrastus, or rather does not withdraw from him his countenance and protection. Adrastus, however, is convinced that he is the most calamitous of men, and seeks alone the sepulchre of Atya, where he immolates himself on his tomb. It is evident that in this story, which we have very briefly summarized, there are the elements of a fine tragedy, and Major Richards has produced one. Independent of the poetical beauty of many of its passages, there is, in the composition, a current of real thought, capable of arresting and entertaining the most vigorous mind.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

P. C.—A butt of beer is 108 gallons.
G. P.—Neats'-foot oil is the fat obtained by boiling calves' feet.

SOL. WILLIAMS.—I never ask a lady her age. I would not advise you to play chess with a widow unless you did not care about being chess-mated.

G. F.—Buchanans is the most eastern province in Scotland, and is two miles to the south of Peterhead in Aberdeenshire.

ANNE would also like to correspond with "Broth of a Boy." She is eighteen years of age, of medium height, has black hair, blue eyes, and is very ladylike in her manners.

L. O.—Byzantium is the ancient name of Constantinople. In the year 330 it was taken possession of by Constantine the Great, enlarged and embellished, and its name changed.

ELIZA, in answer to J. E., begs to say that she is perfectly conversant with all domestic affairs. She has dark hair and eyes, is 5 ft. 5 in. in height, and, by her friends, considered good-looking.

INQUIRER.—A noble was an English coin of the middle ages, of the value of 6s. 8d. current in the reign of Edward III. According to Knighton the real noble was a gold coin in use about the year 1344.

T. S.—The simplest remedy for stopping bleeding at the nose is by elevating one or both arms. This method was communicated some time ago by M. Negrier to the French Academy of Sciences.

INCOGNITA.—A promise made "on the honour of a lady" should certainly be fulfilled. But if you have seen fit to change your mind, and on reflection prefer to decline an interview, a written intimation to that effect should be sent.

LOVE states, for the information of "Broth of a Boy" that she is between seventeen and eighteen years of age, is good-tempered, rather below the medium height, has brown hair and eyes, and would be happy to hear further from him.

CURIO.—We cannot tell. The "officials" called royal wet-nurses, after their periods of service, received £100 a year if they had nursed the younger children of the royal family. The retiring pension of a nurse to the Prince of Wales or the Princess Royal, amounted to no less than £400 a year.

A. R.—Bury St. Edmunds owes its name and principal importance to the relics of King Edmund, who being murdered by the Danes at Hoxna, in Suffolk, was buried there. Being proclaimed a royal martyr, his shrine became an object of great veneration.

T. JAMES.—By an Act of Parliament made in 1697, it was determined that every round bushel with a plain and even bottom, being made 18½ in. wide throughout and 8 in. deep should be esteemed a legal Winchester Bushel, "according to the standard in the Royal Exchequer."

NO SAILOR.—Anti-patrescent substances have the most powerful influence over sea-sickness, and a little crocus made into a pill is much recommended. In ordinary cases, however, a basin of soap, mixed with very hot cayenne pepper, will be found effectual.

ART and GERTRUDE.—"Amy" asks the origin and meaning of *metempsychosis*, and "Gertrude" that of *sed rose*, in the sentiments of Sowers. In the "Langage des Fleurs" it is related that a certain Count Waldstein was paying his addresses to a beautiful heiress, who trifled with his affections, and who had a dependent cousin secretly in love with the

count. One evening, while walking in the garden, the ladies each chose a flower, and the heiress gallily challenged the count to write the description of each in a single line. She had chosen a wild rose, and the count, who had been piqued by her flirtations, wrote—"Charming, but evanescent." The cousin chose mimosa; and the count's motto for this flower was, "Your qualities surpass your charms." The count, it is added, married the cousin, and in compliance to her, inserted the mimosa in his coat-of-arms.

LIZIE would be happy to correspond with J. K. She is twenty-one years of age, of good family, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, has brown hair and blue eyes, is thoroughly domesticated, possesses a very affectionate and loving disposition, and is considered by her friends gentle and good-looking. LIZIE will be happy to exchange *carte-de-visites*.

LAURA P., age twenty-one, with dark hair and hazel eyes, height 5 ft. 2 in. "Laura" has no fortune, but offers a kind and loving heart to a steady young man (who, she stipulates, must be dark, and very industrious and sober). LAURA's handwriting is pretty fair, and the tress of hair, jetty as a raven's wing, and soft as silk.

NEELY wants a motto for a ring. Will either of the following suit her? "Joy sans cesse." "Love always, by night and day." "To enjoy is to obey." "Love for love." "Live to love, love to live." "All for all." "Truth trieth truth." "Bear and forbear." "Where this I give, I wish to live." "In thee my choice, I do rejoice."

DAVID JONES.—Although you are a gentleman in so far as fortune is concerned, it will do you no harm to accustom yourself to labour. It makes the arms strong and hardens the sinews. It not only overcomes idleness, but has a tendency to give grace to the form. Thomson says:

Bold, firm, and graceful, are thy generous youth,
By hardship reared, and by danger fired.
Scattering the nations where they go.

J. C. S.—The term "foolscap" given to paper of a certain size arose from the water-mark having been altered by the Parliament under Cromwell from the king's arms to a fool's cap and bells, as an indignity to the memory of Charles. The name has remained, though the paper-mark has been changed.

G. O. L.—Questions merely speculative, we do not profess to answer; but Berkeley, in his theory of vision, seems to allow that there is an external visible world; but he believes that this external world is tangible only, and not visible; and that the visible world, the proper object of sight, is not external, but in the mind.

E. J. O.—We acquire knowledge more rapidly by the use of signs than through the medium of the ear. This is now well-known to all teachers of the young. Orientals especially are expert in using the language of signs and symbols.

In eastern lands they talk in flowers,
And they tell in a garland their loves and cares;
Each blossom that blooms in their garden bowers
On its leaves a mystic language bears.

A CLERK.—The National Debt did not originate with Queen Anne, as generally supposed; a debt of £10,304,702 existed in 1702, previous to her reign. What originated with Queen Anne was the system of funding to a greater extent than the money actually borrowed; a pernicious and ruinous system, the fruit of which has been our present enormous National Debt of £800,770,238.

A MILL HAN.—No; the factory hours of France are 72 per week; in England they are only 60. The average rate of female wages in the cotton factories of Manchester is about 1s. 3d. per person, per week, which is but trifling. The Manchester of France is only 11s. But the means of living in France are cheaper, and the workpeople more frugal in their habits.

BRANDER'S OXEN.—The adoption of colours as symbols is of very early date; the Moors of Spain by materializing them formed a language. The French still preserve them—i. e., blue as an emblem of fidelity; yellow, of jealousy; red, of cruelty; white, of innocence; black, of sadness and mourning. Blue was in England the recognized symbol of fidelity three centuries ago. The Earl of Sarrey, in his poem of "A Dyin' Love," says:

"In my mind it came from thence not far away,
Where Oswald's love, King Priam's son, the worthy
Troilus lay,

By him I made his tomb, in token he was true,
And as to him beloved well, I overred it with blue."

The expression "true blue" is said to have been first used as a political term by the Scotch Presbyterians, who applied it as against the Episcopalians, citing Numbers, xv., 38.

A PRINGLE.—Yes; especially in London, where there is much wealth, and really much benevolence. The sentiment, however, does not in all operate alike. Sydney Smith once commenced a charity sermon by saying, "Benevolence is a sentiment common to human nature. A never sees B in distress without wishing O to relieve him." We hope the sentiment which animates your breast is personal to yourself.

CICELY CROW.—St. Agnes Day or Eve (the 21st of January) was famous for divinations practised by virgins to discover their future husbands. Burton speaks of maids fasting on St. Agnes' Eve, to know who shall be their first lover or husband, to which Ben Jonson also alludes:

And on sweet St. Agnes' night,
Please you with this promised sight,
Some of husbands, some of lovers,
Which an empty dream discovers."

Another old writer, Aubrey, directs "that upon St. Agnes' night you take a row of pins, and pull out every one, saying a paternoster, sticking a pin in your sleeve, and you will dream of him or her you shall marry."

ANDREW BURWOOD.—Much depends upon the character of your own mind. If that is highly artificial, it is not likely to see much beauty in the simply natural. Generally speaking, men are not attracted by highly-accomplished women, so much as by truly natural and artless women—that is, women sufficiently well-educated to be able to speak and write accurately, and sufficiently childish not to despise common things.

CONSTANCE writes that she wishes to "meet with a gentleman, well-educated, and in some good profession. He must be tall and handsome, with a generous, affectionate disposition, and be able to furnish good references of his respectability. His income must not be less than £1,000 a year; in return for which I offer myself as a young lady of good

family, and possessing a fortune of £500 a year. I am just two-and-twenty years of age; my parents being dead I reside with a maiden aunt. In personal appearance I am handsome, fond of society, and intellectual pursuits. I am sure I will be happy to correspond with any gentleman possessing these qualifications, and whose age does not exceed thirty-five, and will also be willing to exchange *carte-de-visites*."

GAZES.—There is not, it seems to us, any great hardship or injustice in the new "Medical Bill" (about which you are so indignant), providing that all compounders of medicines should undergo an examination as a test of their competence. The number of chemists and druggists is at present about 30,000—an immense increase in the number of the fraternity in former times. In the reign of Henry VIII. there were only twelve "surgeons" in London; and these, as well as "physicians," had to be approved of by the Bishop of London, or Dean of St. Paul, before they were permitted to practise the healing art.

A. T. B.—You, said indeed all persons who are obliged to apply their eyes for a long time without intermission, should avoid the use of a light either too strong or too weak. For perfect vision a distinct picture should be formed at the back of the eye. In the use of artificial light in reading, this is best attained if, with the exception of the book, all around is comparatively dark; which is accomplished by placing a shade over a lamp. Perhaps you had better consult an oculist.

GERTRUDE AND NUMEROUS INQUIRERS.—Speculation is naturally very rife as to the intended name of the royal infant. It will, in all probability, be Albert, though we believe it is not yet finally settled. Since the birth, congratulatory messages have been received from the Emperor and Empress of the French, the King of the Belgians, and other Sovereigns of Europe, to whom, through their different ambassadors resident in England, official notifications of the birth of the prince, were sent according to the prescribed rules of royal etiquette. The following congratulatory address has been presented by the Mayor and Town Council of Southampton to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and will, no doubt, be followed by many more of a similar kind.

"To their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales."

"May it please your Royal Highnesses, We, the Mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the borough of Southampton in council assembled, beg leave to offer our sincere and hearty congratulations to your Royal Highnesses on the gratifying event of the birth of a son and heir."

"We rejoice that it has pleased the Almighty to crown a union that gave such universal satisfaction to the nation, with this first of earthly blessings, which, while it adds to the domestic happiness of your Royal Highnesses and His Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, has given the greatest gratification to a people who take the deepest interest in all that relates to the welfare of every member of the Royal Family."

"We sincerely trust that the infant Prince will grow in health and strength, and that, under the bright influence and noble example of your Royal Highnesses, the virtues by which the public and private lives of our beloved Queen and the deeply lamented Albert, the Good, have been adorned will be transmitted to their grandson."

"We see in this pledge of affection and love a still stronger link of connexion between the illustrious House of Brunswick and the British people, and we sincerely pray that Almighty God may long preserve the lives of your Royal Highnesses to see your children and children's children grow up around you, a comfort to your Royal Highnesses and an example of every virtue that commands the love and affection of the people of the British Empire."

"Given under our common seal, at Southampton, the 18th day of January, A.D. 1864."

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—VENETIA is short, fair, and good-tempered; she is also thoroughly domesticated and does not wish for money, provided she can get a loving, good-tempered husband, fond of his home. She would prefer a person of good morals, religiously inclined, and a restorer, as she is all this herself.—E. R. says that she is of amiable disposition, good-looking, and of medium height. She would wish to correspond with "W.G.," but has nothing but her heart to bestow.—US JESSE HORN wishes to correspond with some prepossessing young lady about eighteen years of age. He is nineteen, and rather tall.—BOAT HOOP desires to correspond with "Bella." He is dark, good-looking, and twenty-seven years of age. He must certainly be a very amiable gentleman, for he says that, "if this lady does not live one of the happiest lives in creation it will be her own fault, as she should have all her own way, and everything on his side that could promote her happiness." We think that "Bella" will be very neglectful of her own interests if she suffers herself to lose this generous chance.—A. C. is nineteen, tall, and dark, and will be happy to exchange her *carte-de-visite* with "W. G."—A. E. L. answering "E. M.," says that she is in her twenty-second year, is ladylike and good-looking. She is ambitious and fond of music, with an excellent temper. She can make both a dress and a shirt, and is thoroughly domesticated. She has no objection, however, to seek her fortunes on the stage, and will be glad to exchange her *carte-de-visite* with "E. M."—We cannot inform RICHARD BATES where he can obtain either the ring or the disc—E. O.'s verses are not quite up to the average standard of THE READER.—M. X. had better try again.—D. F. G.—L. M. Z.—A PRIDE—DESMOND thinks "she can write prose, but cannot write verse." We can assure her, however, that to write good prose is much more difficult than to write good verse.

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